

Blood and Black Lace

Issue 2 £3.00 / US \$6.50



DARIO ARGENTO Profile and Interview

SAMUEL Z ARKOFF remembers MARIO BAVA

Full MARIO BAVA Filmography

Italy's Great New Director ~ MARIANO BAINO

MICHELE SOAVI Profile

U.S./Italian Video Scenes, Soundtracks, News, Views and Reviews

Blood and Black Lace

EDITORIAL



● B&BL editor with Michele Soavi at the British premier of LA SETTA at the London Film Festival

Better late than never, but we're back, bigger and better than before. As you can see, I've gathered here THE best writers working in the genre today, with some great articles which I hope you'll enjoy and will keep you busy until the next great issue of "Blood and Black Lace".

I have been otherwise occupied with producing and directing the video documentary DARK PLEASURES, which contains interviews with a host of horror film-makers including Brian Yuzna, Scott Spiegel and John McNaughton, to name a few. As a first for myself, it went very well and even sold out, so keep a look out for the next one.

Maitland McDonagh's superb book on the works of Dario Argento has been selling so well that she is in the process of negotiating a translated version for an Italian release. Talking of Argento, his latest film, AURA'S ENIGMA starts shooting around March/April 1992. As for Michele Soavi, he's just finished shooting two films back to back; one for TV called INCUBA DELLA SIGNORA (LADY'S NIGHTMARE) and his next big film HORA D'ARIA (HOUR OF AIR), which is a prison inmate's term for the time they are allowed outside for one hour of exercise, etc. And finally Lucio Fulci's latest, CAT IN MY BRAIN (NIGHTMARE CONCERT), although very gory, contains nothing of the mood or atmosphere of his earlier classics, although unintentionally it's very funny. As the Italian press sheet puts it: "Hitchcock invented suspense but Lucio Fulci perfected it"...

How many of you caught London Weekend Television's early morning uncut screening of Dario Argento's BIRD WITH THE CRYSTAL PLUMAGE?!

Before I sign off, I've just received the latest publication from Horror Pictures, covering the Italian queen of horror Barbara Steele. A must for all collectors.

Anyway, hope you enjoy B&BL 2.

Andrew Featherstone - Editor.

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Thanks to:

All the writers for their great contributions, Steve C ("In The Flesh"), Ken Miller ("Imaginator"), John Gullidge ("Samhain"), Dario Argento, Michele Soavi, Mariano Basso, Sam Z Arkoff, Daystar Books, Verne McDonald, Maitland McDonagh, Lucas Balbo, Keith Spooner, Gerard Noel, Neil Thurgood, Alan Jones, Michael Gingold, Richard Klemensen, Gordon Finlayson, John Ewington and everyone who helped to put the magazine together, in whatever fashion.

A limited number of "Blood and Black Lace" issue 1 is available for £2.00 inc. p&p

Dedicated to Susan, Faye and Lauren and the memory of Klaus Kinski.

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Blood and Black LETTERS



Dear Andrew,

I recently bought an issue of "Blood and Black Lace" from Forbidden Planet in London, and am writing with my thoughts on it.

Basically, I loved it. As you point out in your editorial, Britain lacked a zine covering nothing but Italian films and film-makers and you fill the gap very well indeed. The articles are well written, and cover a broad range of subjects - the Bava Jr overview was a trifle brief, but the filmography went somewhat towards making up for that. The BBFC article, though interesting, was (in my opinion, for what it's worth) unnecessary. I think the space could have been put to better use. By what? Oh - I dunno - a couple more reviews perhaps? The stills were well chosen (especially liked the video sleeves) - could you let me know from which film the picture on page 14 is from. It looks a must-see! Also I think you should drop the glossy pages which while they make the zine more aesthetically pleasing, aren't that important (to me). Couldn't the extra money be spent on a higher page count?

Anyway, these are just a few of my ideas, and thoughts - I hope they are useful. As I say, number 1 of B&BL was a tremendous first effort - full marks all round, and good luck with future issues.

All the best,
MATTHEW GOODMAN.



● An enticing (and totally irrelevant) picture of Charlotte Lewis (DIAL HELP)

Dear Andrew,

Many thanks for the debut issue of "Blood and Black Lace", which I enjoyed a lot. With contributors Pam Richards, Gordon Finlayson and John Martin you can't go far wrong! Quality of printing is very impressive, I liked the album covers in the "Song of Death" article. Lamberto Bava is a man I have no time for at all, personally none of his own films have impressed me at all, he's made his career for himself by riding on the back of *real* talent like his father and Dario Argento. That said, the Lamberto filmography was very good, quite a few alternative titles were new to me, although I believe LA STRADA PER FORT ALAMO (ROAD TO FORT ALAMO) was made in 1964, before PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES. Whether or not Lamberto worked on FORT ALAMO I don't know. Also, your filmography neglected to mention the 1978 Italian TV film LA VENNE DE'ILLE, which is known also as THE VENUS OF EVIL (Gordon Finlayson mentioned this in his article as VENUS OF THE ISLE - is he sure?). The unreleased 1974 production CANI ARRIBIATI translates as WILD DOGS.

Anyway, glad you liked issue 8 of "Rats in the Cellar", I'm going to have to correct/expand the Bava filmog in issue 9 because I made a bit of a botch job of it. I will certainly give "Blood and Black Lace" a plug in "Rats" 9, and I'll send you a copy when it's ready.

Best of luck with B&BL, it deserves a long and prosperous run!

Yours,
STEVE DUNN,
8 Limestone Road,
Burniston,
Scarborough
YO13 0DG.

Dear Andrew,

Congratulations on a very well produced first edition of "Blood and Black Lace".

I was so impressed I'm enclosing a cheque for your next copy.

I am a big fan of Italian horror films and agree that there is a gap in the market for this special genre.

I suppose, like a lot of your readers, I was brought up on Lee and Cushing fighting it out in those old Hammer movies. I discovered Argento during the early eighties and have never looked back!

I enjoyed John Martin's article on D'Amato's 11 DAYS 11 NIGHTS. Very well written and witty. I know John's a great fan of Argento from some of his articles in "Samhain" so I hope he'll write something on the man in a future edition.

With Argento in mind I read with interest the article by Mark Hockley, "Argento, the Song of Death", a good item because I feel music plays an important role in any film, genre or not. I disagree with Mark, though, over his opinion that Argento's use of supernatural elements has improved his films.

I much prefer Argento at his Giallo best with films such as FOUR FLIES ON GREY VELVET and TENERRAE.

I was interested in your views on censorship. I feel horror films have declined due to the crazy views of the minority. Directors now seem to deem it necessary to put college type humour or plain senseless antics in their scripts in order to get a "respectable" certificate.

As far as improving your magazine / fanzine goes, I would like to see more pages and possibly a list of videos or films currently banned or unavailable in Britain, because I get a bit tired of hearing the local video shop owner saying he's never heard of the movie I'm asking for.

Yours faithfully,
BOB CAPRINI-WOOD, Liverpool.

Dear Andrew,

Just a few words to say how much I enjoyed the debut issue of "Blood and Black Lace" and to thank you for prompt delivery of my copy. I was impressed by the line-up of talent you'd assembled (I agree with "Melody Maker" that John Martin is one of the best film critics around at present), and I was particularly stricken by Mark Hockley's fine opening article. The "Argento retrospective" has become the bane of the fanzine reader's life of late, horror's equivalent of the glut of Alan Moore interviews appearing in comics-related publications, but Mark's good sense in examining Dario's output from an unusual perspective, via the use of music in his films, made for an original and enlightening feature.

Great stuff overall, then, and as someone who regards STAGEFRIGHT as a modern masterpiece and its director as potentially the most exciting talent currently working, I'm looking forward with genuine anticipation to "Blood and Black Lace" # 2 and your overview of Michele Soavi's career.

To finish, two questions: a) Why was the Lamberto Bava piece illustrated with a detail from the poster for DEEP RED? and b) Who is this "John Gullio" (granted, he did spell your name incorrectly too - revenge at last!)

Best wishes for the future,

Cheers,
DARRELL BUXTON,
Editor - "Imagination Explosion".
Derby.

Andrew,

At last! An English language fanzine devoted to Italian horror cinema. For years folks have been devoting partial space to these films, but for a fanatic like myself it was never enough. Now with "Blood and Black Lace" my dreams have come true. Not only is it well written but it has a nice layout and is supported with lots of great artwork. On to specifics:

The cover just about says it all. Everyone of those scenes depicted represent high water marks in the Italian horror cinema. I hope Pam Richards can become a permanent fixture on your front cover. I miss seeing her work in "Samhain". I have a copy of the uncut English language version of OPERA and I think it is a travesty what Orion has done with it. This continues the depressing trend of mutilating Argento's work in this country. To see Argento's original version is a true pleasure, thank god the underground video network exists.

Mark Hockley's coverage of the music scores of Argento films is the sort of article I enjoy as he takes an aspect of Argento's films that gets little discussion and then proceeds to do just that. I've enclosed photocopies of the cover to the score of OPERA to show Mark that an album was issued that contained both opera tracks and music by Simonetti. I agree with Mark's opinion that the Morricone scores are disappointing to listen to but I feel it has more to do with the subject matter than Morricone. After the release of BIRD on LP and suffering though it, it's no wonder full LPs of CAT and FOUR FLIES never came to be. Goblin obviously represents the peak in Argento films as far as original scores go and his trend towards loud obnoxious heavy metal bands and their screaming lyrics is, for me, a depressing step backwards. I know it's done for economic reasons but that doesn't mean I have to like it. I don't share Mark's opinion that Argento's return to the Giallo field is a step backward as TENEBRAE, next to SUSPIRIA, is without a doubt my favourite film.

Gordon Finlayson has always been one of my favourite writers and his appropriately titled article on Lamberto Bava didn't disappoint. The centre-spread used for the Lamberto Bava filmography was a nice visual treat. Those types of touches show to me you have an excellent design sense and bodes well for B&BL's future.

Andrew Black was 100% correct about most of those Italian Sci-Fi "epics". Even worse than the ones he mentioned were the STAR WARS rip-offs directed by Al Brescia/Bradly. Jeez, what stinkers!

John Martin is without peer when it comes to knowledge of the Italian film industry. On top of that he has the talent to discuss all aspects of the industry and so to see his article on the D'Amato sex films (neither of which have seen a video or theatrical release in this country, though I have the Italian soundtrack to the first film) made for my favourite article in issue 1. John keeps his sense of humour when it comes to the more entertaining films and directors and that's why it was gratifying to read what he had to say about the two (and now maybe three?) film series. I still say, the best 9 1/2 WEEKS rip-off is Fulci's THE DEVIL'S HONEY as does Mr Martin. The final reviews were interesting but I wish there were more of them.

Many thanks. Can't wait to see the next one.
CRAIG LEDBETTER, USA.
Editor - "E.T.C."

Dear Andrew,

Thanks for sending me the first issue of "Blood and Black Lace". A zine dealing exclusively with Italian horror is just what the doctor ordered.

I would love to be able to help by distributing your zine here but unfortunately there is nobody to distribute it to. The fan scene here is absolutely non-existent. Nobody gives a toss about the genre. Mention Peter Cushing and no-one knows what you're talking about let alone Mario Bava or Dario Argento. There's nothing I'd like more than to get involved in the scene in any way but in Ireland it's like pissing against the wind. Maybe things will improve a little now with the opening of a branch of Forbidden Planet in Dublin earlier this year but so far there's been damn all horror film material apart from a few "Fangorias" etc. If the scene ever does improve I'll be the first to help out in any way I can.

Until then at least I'll be eagerly awaiting each issue for what it's worth. I particularly liked the Argento article and the piece on PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES in issue 1. More on some of the older films would be welcome in future issues. Ah, well, all the best for the future and hopefully the zine will be a

success because as you say there is a gap in the market for this sort of publication.

Best wishes,
ROMAN FARELL, Co Louth, Ireland.

Andrew,

Thanks very much for the debut "Blood and Black Lace". I enjoyed it very much and because I continue to get more and more into Italian cinema, the issue proved quite informative. In fact, before reading B&BL, my knowledge of Lamberto Bava was miniscule at best, but the issue filled in a number of gaps.

But anyway, I've enclosed issues 23 and 24 of "ER", the latest of which was just printed the other day, despite its July masthead date. Number 25 is half complete, and should be winging its way to you at the end of this month. It will include a plug for B&BL, and I hope that we can continue to exchange issues in the years to come.

Well, must dash. Hope you enjoy ER as much as I enjoyed B&BL! Take care and I look forward to hearing from you.

Adoba
DAN TAYLOR
Editor: "Exploitation Restrospective".

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THE BLOOD, SHIT AND SPERM OF DARIO ARGENTO

Profile and Interview by John Martin



Dou should never meet your heroes, or so they say. The risk of disillusionment is just too great. Bearing this nugget of received wisdom in mind, it was with a definite sense of trepidation that I travelled down to The Scala on the 29th June, to meet the man who occupies pole position in my personal pantheon of idols: Dario Argento, although he identifies his artistic motivation (in Michele Soavi's *WORLD OF HORROR* documentary) as a desire to be loved, has acquired a distinctly unlovable reputation. Reports of his "difficult" behaviour abound. "Mad, bad and dangerous to know" is about the most flattering assessment of Il Maestro to emanate from certain quarters. Well, perhaps Argento is all of the above, and worse, on set (and if that's what it takes to get such stunning movies made, so be it) but I'm happy to report that under other conditions (specifically, promoting the publication of Maitland McDonagh's new book about him!) Argento proves to be a surprise of the most pleasant variety.

Small and frail-looking, though not quite so cadaverous as he sometimes comes across in photographs (stop me if I start sounding too much like Christiano Berti from *TENEBRAE*), he turns up unannounced and (despite his supposed penchant for minders and hangers-on) unaccompanied, checking out the legendary graffiti in the Scala foyer... probably working out some fiendish camera crawl over it. Jaws drop as the punters realise who is in their midst ("Oh my god... it's him!") and a certain wee Scots lass has admitted "bursting into tears" at the sight of her main-man, but Argento seems genuinely amazed, at all of this adulation, albeit no less delighted. Throwing himself enthusiastically into furious palm-pumping, memorabilia-signing and earnest conversations in broken English with a steady procession of admirers (the queue soon bending on itself, snake-like, up and down the steps of the Scala stair-case), each seemingly with a story to tell about how their life was changed by *SUSPIRIA* or *INFERNO* or *TENEBRAE*, Argento basically had the time of his life. Indeed



that "love" quote turns out to be the god-honest guileless truth rather than the conceit it once seemed.

Having taken the stage to introduce *OPERA* by apparently dedicating his life to a religious crusade that will no doubt find as much favour with the *BLOOD AND BLACK LACE* faithful as it did with the Scala congregation ("I have become like a monk - a monk of... against censors!"). The following interview excerpts commence with Argento's observations on that feverish fan response.

"I don't do anything in a specific attempt to appeal to this young audience... it just happens. I tell my dreams, and if that's the way my dreams come out... [shrugs]. But I am devoted to my public. I travel around a lot, in fact I'm a globe-trotter! Wherever one of my films is released, I go - always! I love people... they interest me."

● Above: Dario Argento with "Broken Mirrors" author, Maitland McDonagh

● Left: Dario Argento filming *TWO EVIL EYES*

DA: I don't do anything in a specific attempt to appeal to this young audience... it just happens. I tell my dreams, and if that's the way my dreams come out... [shrugs]. But I am devoted to my public. I travel around a lot, in fact I'm a globe-trotter! Wherever one of my films is released, I go - always! I love people... they interest me.

It is because I need to have this dialogue with my fans, and for that reason only, that I am prepared to make some compromises. You have to accept compromise if you want to make films! Cinema is the art of compromise... especially today.

JM: Is it difficult for you to accept these compromises?

DA: I don't accept all of them, more often I find that I have to fight the system... that's why I keep saying we should abolish censorship and set the directors free.

JM: Do you think that increasingly onerous censorship is to blame for the poor shape that the horror genre currently finds itself in?

DA: Yes, I think that's the case... especially in America, where horror films have disappeared. A year ago... no, three years ago, let's say... there were lots of American horror films being produced. This year? Nothing! And certainly, censorship has played a part in all of this. That's why I say that censorship must be stopped. It's absurd!

JM: Isn't the Italian horror scene in an even worse state than the American one?

“It feels like my career has just started, like it started only a moment ago. Yes, I am still “full of sperm” [laughs]! For me it’s really like a natural function... if you didn’t shit you would die, and it’s like that - I’ve got to do it, because if I didn’t, I would die. It’s a necessity.”



● A young Dario Argento, supervising shooting on *SUSPIRIA*

DA: In Italy, horror cinema has virtually disappeared: There’s only me and my small “factory” now... Lamberto Bava, Michele Soavi, special effects man Sergio Stivaletti... a few script-writers. There’s just a handful of us left doing it.

JM: There’s a shortage of really top-notch special FX people in Italy...

DA: Well, Sergio Stivaletti is quite good... and we had Rambaldi, the great Rambaldi...

JM: Yes, but no-one who could be compared to some of the American FX masters, such as Tom Savini, who worked for you on *TWO EVIL EYES*...

DA: Well, Tom Savini is an artist, a great artist... he’s a sculptor, he builds models that nobody else in the world can do... his models are truly unique. He also does the animatronics exceptionally well. For example, the cat head he did for me on *TWO EVIL EYES*... it was about this big [makes sweeping gesture]—the head moved... the eyes, the ears, the nose...



● Argento again, at the Scala

But Tom was born a great artist, it could have happened anywhere... in America, or France, or wherever... sometimes a genius is just born

JM: Will he work with you on your next film?

DA: Yes, because I’m shooting in Pittsburgh again.

JM: Can you tell us something about the picture?

DA: It’s called *AURA’S ENIGMA*. It takes place in Pittsburgh because I had the idea while I was working there, during the three months it took to edit my “Black Cat” segment of *TWO EVIL EYES*... I find editing very easy, it doesn’t take too much out of me. So I was all alone in my room for long periods, and I spent time writing the story, then I wrote the screenplay, and I’m going to shoot it at the end of 1991.

JM: There’s a rumour that you’re going to shoot the film from an animal’s point of view.

DA: There’ll be a segment shot from an animal’s view-point... the point of view of a lizard: Not the whole film, just a small segment of it. I did have a project to be shot entirely from an animal’s p-o-v, but there would have been so many problems...

JM: Are you still, in the words of Sergio Leone, “full of cinematic sperm”? Are you still in love with film?

DA: Yes, it feels like my career has just started, like it started only a moment ago. Yes, I am still “full of sperm” [laughs]! For me it’s really like a natural function... if you didn’t shit you would die, and it’s like that - I’ve got to do it, because if I didn’t, I would die. It’s a necessity.

Argento is indeed so very passionate about his work that deciding, ten minutes into the screening of *OPERA*, that the

audience weren’t receiving the requisite audio-visual pummelling, he charged off into the projection room and ordered the projectionist to crank up the volume. Ignoring *STAR TREK*-type warnings that the Scala’s speakers wouldn’t take the level being demanded, Cap’n Argento remained adamant. The fretting projectionist complied, and the rest of the film unspooled with unbearably distorted sound.

Dario Argento... gotta love the guy!

“Broken Mirrors / Broken Minds: The Dark Dreams of Dario Argento”, published in hard-back by Sun Tavern Fields at £15 per copy, available from P.O. Box 982, London, E1 9EQ: a welcome scholarly antidote to all those superficial “This is how you set up a lousa crane shot” treatments of Argento’s work... but then again, I am biased, being cited in both the acknowledgements and bibliography... incredible isn’t it, that a mere fanzine sycophant such as I should be accorded such treatment, when the boy genius, whose idea of deep insight is to fret out the laughable phrase “Visconti of Violence” every time Argento’s name crops up, doesn’t even get a mention!

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Due Occi Diabolici TWO EVIL EYES

Review by Kim Newman

ADC-GRUPPO BEMA. 1990. 105 Min. Director/co-screenwriter: George A. Romero. Director/co-screenwriter/co-producer: Dario Argento. Co-producer: Achille Manzotti. Co-screenwriter: Franco Ferrini. Cinematographers: Peter Reniers, Giuseppe Macari. Special effects: Tom Savini. Cast: Harvey Keitel, Adrienne Barbeau, Madeleine Potter, Martin Balsam, E.G. Marshall, Romy Zada, Bingo O'Malley, Kim Hunter, Sally Kirkland, John Amos, Tom Atkins.



● Above: Mr Valdemar rises from the dead

● Left: The remains of Madeleine Potter

The idea of producing a portmanteau film based on the stories of Edgar Allan Poe is hardly among the most original in the genre canon, dating back at least to Richard Oswald's German *Fünf Unheimliche Geschichten* / *Five Tales of Horror* (1919), which threw R.L. Stevenson's "The Suicide Club" in with Poe's "The Black Cat" and "The System of Dr Tarr and Professor Fether". Oswald remade it as a talkie in 1931 (aka *The Living Dead*), then there was a French *Histoires Extraordinaires* (1948) which tosses in De Quincey's "Eccle Homo" with "The Tell-Tale Heart" and "The Cask of Amontillado", followed by an Argentine *Obras Maestros del Terrore* / *Master of Horror* (1960), from "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar", "The Cask of Amontillado" and "The Tell-Tale Heart". Roger Corman's *Tales of*

Terror (1961), which had "Morella", a fusion of "The Black Cat" and "The Cask of Amontillado" and "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar" and the triple-decker *Histoires Extraordinaires* / *Spirits of the Dead* / *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* (1968), in which Roger Vadim, Louis Malle and Federico Fellini at least had the wit to adapt underfilmed Poe tales, "Metzengerstein", "William Wilson" and "Never Bet the Devil Your Head".

On top of all these omnibus pictures, Poe must rank as one of the most over-adapted authors of all time, with film-makers - most persistently Richard Oswald between the wars, Roger Corman and AIP in the '60's and the dreaded Harry Alan Towers now - returning again and again to such celebrated titles as "The Black Cat", "The Fall of the House of Usher", "Masque of the Red

Death", "The Pit and the Pendulum", "The Premature Burial", "The Tell-Tale Heart", "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", "The System of Dr Tarr and Professor Fether" and "The Raven", if not to the actual stories (or poems, or essays) themselves. There have been Poe pictures from Lucio Fulci (*Il Gatto Nero di Park Lane* / *The Black Cat*, 1980), Sergio Martino (*Il tuo vizio è una stanza chiusa e solo lo ne ho la chiave* / *Excite Me*, 1972), D.W. Griffith (*The Avenging Conscience*, 1914), Stuart Gordon (*The Pit and the Pendulum*, 1991), Jesus Franco (*El hundimiento de la casa Usher* / *Revenge in the House of Usher*, 1983), Jan Svankmajer (*Kyvalo, Jama a Nadeje* / *The Pit, The Pendulum and Hope*, 1983), W. Lee Wilder (*Manfish*, 1956), Gordon Hessler (*The Oblong Box*, 1968, *Murders in the Rue Morgue*, 1971), Edgar G. Ulmer (*The Black Cat*, 1934), Dwayne Esper (*Maniac*, 1934), William Cameron Menzies (*The Tell-Tale Heart*, 1954), Robert Florey (*Murders in the Rue Morgue*, 1932), Jean Epstein (*La chute de la maison Usher*, 1928), Jules Dassin (*The Tell-Tale Heart*, 1941), Curtis Harrington (*The Fall of the House of Usher*, 1942) *The Assignment*, 1952), Harald Reinl (*Das Schlangenraube und das Pendel* / *Blood Demon* / *The Torture Chamber of Dr Sadism*, 1967) and



Joan Lopez Moctezuma (*MANSION DE LOCURA / HOUSE OF MADNESS*, 1972). Poe himself has appeared as a character in *MAN WITH A CLOAK* (1951, with Joseph Cotten), Freddie Francis' *TORTURE GARDEN* (1968), Antonio Margheriti's *LA DANZA MACABRA / CASTLE OF BLOOD* (1964) and its remake *NELLA STRETTA DEL MORSA DEL RAGNO / GRIP OF THE SPIDER* (1971, with Klaus Kinski) and *THE SPECTRE OF EDGAR ALLAN POE* (1972, with Robert Walker Jr.). Among the films actually derived from Poe that don't usually crop up in listings of his screen credits are Hammer's *KISS OF THE VAMPIRE* (an unacknowledged remake of Ulmer's *THE BLACK CAT*), Howard Hawks' John Wayne western *EL DORADO* (1968) and Nicolas Roeg's arty splatter movie *EURYKA!* (1981).

When Dario Argento originally proposed the notion of yet another Poe picture, it was intended to include episodes by three or more genre auteurs (John Carpenter), Clive

Barker and Wes Craven were lined up as possibles), although scheduling hassles soon reduced the roster to Argento and George A. Romero, reteaming after their work together on *DAWN OF THE DEAD* (1978). Unsurprisingly, the pair chose to concentrate on already much-adapted Poe tales, with Romero making a last minute decision to do "M. Valdemar" (identified as "The Facts in the Case of Mr Valdemar" on screen) rather than a futuristic reading of "The Masque of the Red Death" to star Donald Sutherland, while Argento plumped for the incredibly over-filmed "The Black Cat" (at least 15 versions to date), throwing in a few licks from "The Pit and the Pendulum" and "Berenice", plus character names like Rod Usher and Annabel Lee. Opening with a few shots of Poe's grave - which he wound up in supposedly as a result of alcohol poisoning after a heavy evening of ballot-stuffing and boozing in Baltimore - *DUE OCCHI DIABOLICI* is, almost by default, a remake of Roger Corman's *TALES OF TERROR* with a story dropped (Corman remedied the omission by producing *THE HAUNTING OF MORELLA*, 1990). Although Romero and Argento choose to give their adaptations contemporary settings rather than wallow in period gothic trappings, they both follow similar courses to Corman's Richard Matheson-scripted film in altering the very slight original stories for the purposes of a modern audience, Romero imposing a trite romantic triangle/EC Comic revenge from the grave angle on a tale that is essentially a scary notion, while Argento just piles in references and out-takes from other Poe tales to beef up Poe's brooding character study.

Romero takes the simple premise of Poe's story, in which a man survives his death through hypnosis, and embroiders it with a typical lovers-plot-against-the-husband storyline as gold-digging Jessica (Barbeau), married to zillionaire Ernie Valdemar

(O'Malley), schemes with her hypnotist-doctor lover (Zada) to keep the old man going while his will can be processed by lawyer Pike (Marshall). While Barbeau's bitch performance (in the spirit of her similar work with Romero on *CREEPSHOW*, 1982) keeps the story going, Romero unwisely yanks in some of his trademark zombies and some nebulous evil spirits that would be more at home in a *POLTERGEIST* sequel for a series of supernatural twists that prolong the plot into several false endings. Playing like an elongated episode of *TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE*, this is, despite generally good acting and a few touches of Romero's habitual cynicism, quite the slightest thing its creator has ever done.

Given feature-length, Romero is probably - with David Cronenberg - the best of the current genre masters, but trapped in short story form (as in *CREEPSHOW*, and his script contributions to *CREEPSHOW 2*, 1986 and *TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE: THE MOVIE*, 1990) he reverts to tired old conventions and hokey semi-scares. Even his pithy dialogue sense deserts him (someone actually says "there's a logical explanation for everything" at one point), and the episode suffers further from bewildering point-of-view changes. At first, Barbeau is the lead character - and the actress performs a minor miracle by making the cartoon villainess an interesting and almost likeable person - but she blows her brains out offscreen in the first of three awkward climaxes, and we shift attention to the unbelievable Zada, who hypnotises himself to sleep and is killed by 'the others' - blue-body stockings from the beyond - who shove a metronome through his heart but leave him hideously alive like Valdemar before him. After that, Tom Atkins is introduced as yet another main character, cropping up in the last five minutes of the episode as a cigar-chewing cop (in a continuity slip, the cigar disappears between shots) who finds the zombified Zada and is properly reduced to screaming terror, uselessly emptying his gun into the tired Tom Savini walking corpse - much less impressive than the creatures in Romero and Savini's *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* remake (1990) - and cueing the irrelevant but striking Romeroesque final shot of blood splattering over the eye-in-a-triangle symbol on a dollar bill.

Not only is the business with the lovers tormented by the frozen living corpse of their victim very familiar - it's a more conventional reading of the first episode of *ASYLUM* (1971), in which brown-paper-wrapped body parts crawl from the freezer to torment Richard Johnson - but Romero even fudges the most memorable scene in the original story, and in the Corman version, in which the preserved Valdemar is woken up and deliquesces into a pool of putrescence. As originally planned, the stories would neatly segue into each other - a device under-used in omnibus pictures, cropping up in the genre only in *FLESH AND FANTASY* (1943), which is so smug it even congratulates itself on using the trick - by having Rod Usher (Kietel), a photographer specialising in horrific images and the protagonist of Argento's "The Black Cat",



● Ms Potter's gory demise

turn up to cover Valdemar's mysterious death and then walk off into his own story. This idea seems to have been dropped because of a) the need to have individual credits appear before each episode, and b) Argento's desire to open with another Poe-inspired atrocity as Usher photographs a nude female corpse who has been bisected by a pendulum device. This results in yet another fudged join, as John Amos has to take over from Atkins' plot function, whereas Atkins could easily have trotted from the Romero to the Argento episodes and provided some sense of continuity.

Harvey Kietel's Usher is involved in a fraught relationship with Annabel (Potter), an ethereal cat-lover who is trying to escape from his brutality and who, in an earlier incarnation seen in a dream, was a witch who fed to Kietel's impaling. Kietel's half-comic, half-horrific performance is as much in the spirit of Poe as Vincent Price's Corman protagonists, and, along with Potter's fragile presence, provides a focus for Argento's usual camera tricks, elaborate effects and narrative confusion. As Kietel gets crazier, the story becomes more obscure, until it finally pays off with a ridiculous fate for the murderer as he accidentally hangs himself trying to make a getaway while handcuffed to a dead policeman. While the casting of the eerie Potter is in Argento's usual tradition of employing striking actresses he then requires to give walking dead performances before their murders, Kietel gives the film a much-needed shake-up. As written, Usher is a typical Argento caricature - another murderously-inclined artist to follow Anthony Franciosa in *TENEBRAE* (1982) - but Kietel is a forceful enough presence to make him probably the most rounded and credible individual character in an Argento film to date. However, his detailed portrait of an obsessive, constantly drinking nut with terrible taste in hats (Look who's taking! - Ed) and music doesn't quite jell with Argento's usual slap-dash scripting.

"The Black Cat" floats blithely from incident to image with no rhyme or reason - which I'd assume was a faithful rendition of Poe's similarly delicious plotting, if almost all Argento films weren't like that - as the director concentrates on creating an impression rather than telling a story. Among the more unlikely ideas in the film is that Usher can torture Annabel's cat to death to get some stunning snaps for his forthcoming coffee table book "Metropolitan Horrors", and then expect Annabel not to catch on that he's killed her pet even though the evidence is on the cover of the book, which she first sees in a shop window display even though she's been living with Usher for four years and might reasonably be expected to have seen one of the copies lying around the house that Usher gives to the cop on the case in the final scene. And when the time comes for the story to stop being surreal and get into Savini splatter, the silly mutant cat puppets and chewed corpse in the cupboard dummy hardly help the mood stay serious.

Often, as in *SUSPIRIA* (1977) and *INFERNO* (1980), Argento's pointillist approach results in something masterful and, in *PROFONDO ROSSO* (aka *DEEP RED*,



● Above and Left: Two graphic moments from George Romero's 'Mr Valdemar' episode

1976), he showed he could damn well tell a story if he wanted to, but his recent movies - especially the disastrous *PHENOMENA* (aka *CREEPERS*, 1985) - suggest the style-for-style's-sake horror film is wearing thin. "The Black Cat", because it's short enough for its lack of a conventional storyline not to get too exasperating, is a modest return to form, although the final suspense scenes are irritating rather than exciting, and the ultimate fate of Rod Usher, prefigured by a white patch on the cat's neck is stupid enough to be seen as an insult to the audience. Nevertheless, this episode towers above its co-feature simply for Kietel's performance and the usual Argento-isms: a feeling of cosmopolitan decadence, callous black humour, odd bits of poetry, pretty compositions, Potter's beesting lips, genuinely Sadean humour, bizarre cameos (Sally Kirkland as a philosophical barmaid) and frequent lurches of suspense. For buffs, Argento not only plays Poe references but also movie games, with Martin Balsam in a set-up reminiscent of his death in *PSYCHO* (1960) that pays off differently and Kim Hunter as a pleasant reminder of the similarly driven and obsessive *THE SEVENTH VICTIM* (1943), even a cameo by a wild-eyed Tom Savini as the murderer who pulled his cousin's teeth out.

Although full of interesting ideas and performances - and arguably as true to Poe's faults as to his virtues - *DUE OCCHI*

DIABOLICI is ultimately as frustrating as it is fascinating. Romero sleepwalks like his monster character, while Argento picks away at the scabs. Both are doubtless hurrying on to bigger-scaled ventures. Meanwhile, the English language *TWO EVIL EYES* has been much delayed on its American release and been by-passed for theatrical distribution in the UK after a few festival appearances, coming out on Medusa Video, which is better than nothing, although the film-in-a-box format hardly helps the film. If anything, video restores a kind of balance, making the ordinariness of Romero's episode seem like professionalism, while curbing the screen-filling bravura of Argento, so that moments which seem stunning up there in the cinema (Kietel's dream impalement, the p-o-v swoop of the pendulum) fall flat on the dull curve of the TV monitor. Poe himself, the sloppiest of all geniuses, would probably recognise these adaptations as fair comment, but, while encouragingly ambitious, Romero and Argento fall sadly short of the best of screen Poe, Ulmer's *BLACK CAT*, Corman's *MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH* (1964) and *TOMB OF LIGEIA* (1965), Fellini's *TOBY DAMMIT* (1968) and Svankmajer's *KYVALO, JAMA A NADEJE*.
JSC

¹ Although in February 1990, I was present when Carpenter turned down Dennis Eschison's invitation to a screening of *DUE OCCHI DIABOLICI*, perhaps because of the presence of the ex-Mrs Carpenter (Adrienne Barbeau) in the cast. Eschison has worked with both Carpenter and Argento.

² Author, of course, of "The New Murders in the Rue Morgue".



OVERCOMING STAGE FRIGHT

Michele Soavi - profile and filmography

"My brief to Michele Soavi was to explore the feelings I had about life in contemporary Germany beginning a new Middle Ages" says producer Dario Argento about **THE CHURCH**. "Anyone expecting **DEMONS** ? is in for a really big surprise. Michele is the only Italian director apart from myself with the courage to make something new and different."

Directing Michele Soavi comments: "I'm worried people won't realise every frame of **THE CHURCH** has been well thought out. I haven't included anything just for the sake of effect. I turned what was conceived as schlock pizza cinema into a strong essay on Karma and the ambiguous inner conflicts we all face at sometime in our lives."

Michele Soavi was born in Milan 32 years ago. At 18 he left school with dreams of working in cinema and entered the Italian film industry as an actor. Selected credits include **CALIGULA - THE UNBROKEN STORY**, **ALIEN TERROR CITY OF THE LIVING DEAD**, **ANTHROPOPOLOGUS**, **ATLANTEA**, **INTERFLEXIONS**, **A BLADE IN THE DARK** and **LANDGAME**. Pursuing his career avenue, a role in the 1979 drama **BAMBULLI** led to Soavi helping out director Marco Medugno on the production side. Soavi continues: "I also doubled in screenwriting working with both Lucio Fulci and Antonio Marguerite. Joe D'Amato (Soavi helped D'Amato write his **AIOR** movies) first met Dario Argento after he had made **INFERNAL**. I asked him to read one of my screenplays and he made helpful suggestions. We became good friends so I summoned up the courage to ask if I could work with him sometime. When Dario was preparing **EVILBRIDE** he thought of me and I became his second assistant."

In 1984 Soavi was promoted first assistant on **PRIMUM FIDELITY**. He also directed the rock video for Bill Wyman and Terry Taylor's wacky theme from the soundtrack. One year later he worked in the same capacity for Lamberto Bava for **DEMONS** and played the man in the mask haunting the preview clips. Then he directed **DARIO ARGENTO'S WORLD OF HORRORS** a documentary made for Japanese television. In 1987 Soavi made his debut feature as director with **STAGE FRIGHT**. **AO ARI** 5, winner of the Fear Award at the Venice Fantasy Film Festival, under the title **BLOODY BIRD**. He played the James Dean-obsessed policeman in the film revived dubbing format on release by producer Joe D'Amato. Also being Argento's first assistant on **PERA** and appearing as a soldier during Soavi shot a film called **THE ADVENTURES OF BARON**.

Flood and Backstage



● Michele Soavi with Sergio Stivaletti's mechanical fish which lives in **THE CHURCH** font

MLNCHAI SUN. He began shooting **THE CHURCH** September 1988 in occasion in Budapest. Finishing age even weeks later in

Hamburg. Again Soavi appears in **THE CHURCH** as a policeman. Soavi's next film is **LANE 1 A**.



● Soavi with jet-set screenwriter Gianni Romo at the London Film Festival

MICHELE SOAVI

Filmography

Compiled by Gordon Finlayson

Director, assistant director, actor, 2nd unit director, screenwriter, editing assistant, editing secretary, story writer.

Born in Milan, on July 3rd 1957.

PSEUDONYMS: Michael Shaw, Michael Soavi, Mike Soft, Michael Saroyan.

1979	BAMBITO	(Producer, Assistant Director, Actor)
	PICCOLI E LABBRA	(Actor)
	IL FIGLIO DELLE STELLE	(Editing Assistant)
1980	L'OMINI E NO	(Actor)
	PAURA NELLA CITTA DEI MORTI VIVENTI	(Actor)
	IL GIORNO DEL COBRA	(Actor)
	ALIEN 2 SULLA TERRA	(Actor - Michael Shaw)
1981	LACRIME NAPULITANE	(Editing Secretary)
	ROSSO SANGUE	
1982	TENEBRE	(Second Assistant Director)
	ANNI 60	(Music)
	LA CASA CON LA SCALA NEL BUIO	(Assistant Director, Actor)
	CALIGOLA - LA STORIA MAI RACCONTATA	(Assistant Director, Actor)
	ATOR L'INVINCIBILE	(Co screenwriter)
1983	IL PREDATORE DI ATLANTIDE	(Actor - Mike Soft)
	ANNO 2028 I GLADIATORI DEL FUTURO	(Assistant Director - Mike Soft)
	ENDGAME (BRONX LOTTA FINALE)	(Assistant Director - Mike Soft, Actor)
	ATOR 2 L'INVINCIBILE ORION (ATOR II), ATOR L'INVINCIBILE 2	(uncredited writer)
1984	BLASTFIGHTER	(Assistant Director, Actor - Mike Saroyan)
	PIENOMENA	(1st Assistant Director, Actor)
	"VALLEY" — Rock Video	(Director)
1985	DEMONI	(Assistant Director, Actor)
	"DEMONI" — Rock Video	(Director)
	DARIO ARGENTO'S WORLD OF HORROR	(Director - Documentary)
1987	OPERA	(2nd Unit director Actor)
	DELIRIA	(Director, Actor - Michael Soavi)
1988	THE ADVENTURES OF BARON MUNCHHAUSEN	(2nd Unit Director)
	WAKAN	(Actor) Made??
	SHARKS	Made??
1989	LA CHIESA	(Director)
1990	LA MASCHERA DEL DEMONIO	(Actor)
	THE BLACK CAT	(Actor, uncredited)
1990*	VOGLIA DI ROCK	Story Writer
1991	LA SETTA	(Director, co-Screenwriter)
	INCUBA DEL LA SIGNORA	Director
	HORA D'ARIA	Director

PEW WHAT A STINKER!

THE CHURCH *reviewed by John Martin*



Entering the Italian box-office charts at number 7 on its release but plummeting like a stone after word of mouth had got around, Michele Soavi's sun-baked-up, cooked-up NAME OF THE ROSE would seem as dead under any other moniker, and there have been several of those. DEMONS 3 RETURN TO THE LAND OF THE DEMONS RETURN TO DEMON COUNTRY and DEMON (ALTA DRA) along the way as the project mutated through various stages into its present form. I nearly wrote *shape* but that really *would* be stretching a point, during which time original director Lamberto Bava quit the project to continue his relentless career shooting TV movie medocrytically, accompanied by Gordon Fintysson in B&B #1.

LA CHIESA confirms the suspicion that the pluming generation of giallo wannabes is faced with a stark choice between drowning in the mire of degenerated Italian cinema or falling into the Argentine orbit, here inevitably exposed by the mercantile genius Soavi, here, has been charged with cooking up something from an Argentine nut, one so half-baked that it could

probably make a poster for a potting (My heart to Michele was to explore the feelings I had about life in contemporary Germany beginning a new Middle Ages). The sheer naivete of LA CHIESA was eminently predictable, given that Soavi was working in such a hurry, not a tiny surprise in view of the ominous implications for Soavi's career status, but he has chosen to filter the texture of this misfiring, misfiring medocrytically, with irritating throwaway allusions to such personal fetishes as a cheyenne who alleged resemblance James Dean and even revealing his knock-out feature, which STAFFORD, I think, is now tempted to believe was a complete fluke in the earlier, "camp" stamp some kind of signature on the proceedings.

Things start promisingly enough, with a posse of Teutonic knights groping through a lush forest, daybreak, the accompaniment of Kerio Emerson's warm, lugubrious score by Emerson. This process into the reformed Simonides's fashion is one of the few aspects of LA CHIESA that works consistently. Acting on a hot tip-off from an over-acting village idiot (who looks

kuspically like an uncredited Terry G. Ham, repaying Soavi for his yeoman second unit service on BARTON MACHAUSEN) the knights storm the cave HQ of some devilish plotting peasants and put them to the sword. This sequence features a memorable cross-shaped p.o.v. shot through a knight's helmet visor. Indicating the viewer's narrow world view, this is a rare incidence of camera pyrotechnics married to intelligence in a movie where the visual effects are generally tossed in for their own vicious sake. After the witches have been buried in a common grave and the scene marked with a huge cross, an epic steamtrain shot brings us to the present day and to the cathedral which has been erected on this spot (where the presiding prelate is none other than Mister SA himself, Giovanni Lombardo Rodice aka John Morghen). How could Soavi possibly feel up after such an impressive opening? Read on and weep.

Yappie dark ages buff Tomas Arana arrives at the church to assist Barbara Cupisti (in her STAFFORD alumnae and Soavi's real life mini-squeeze while this movie was being made) in the resurrection of a demonic marauder (shades of Pulp Avatar's master, THE HOUSE OF LAUGHING WINDOWS) who's coming in her honor. Champion NAME OF THE ROSE, IN-LEND, sermonizes endlessly about the ever-present threat of demons, although we don't really see any until the final reel, and then wish we hadn't due to the neptitude with which they are rendered (even Sergio Stivalotti's reputation drops under several punches). Apparently the phobias of these Teutonic knights are also hanging around the place, because somebody in the linen department is working over time bringing coconuts she's hoarded to render the half traces of her special mounds. Arana, who has already displayed a marked tendency towards talkiness with his preference for the peruse of medieval inscriptions over the charms of cupist's possessed by evil spirits while prying into the basement pit of souls. We know that he's possessed because he keeps coming in, but sits at a desk, and endlessly tape up the legend, too. (Yes, we've seen TIT SHIMING too) and starts coming in the mouth over Asia Argento's neck, necks. More speed, clearly, as he's equally stupid. Arana is later seen in a telephone box, not changing into a supernatural costume as you might think, however, if he did, it would be far from the dumbest thing that happens during the course of this movie, but tearing out his own heart and offering the soul-pumping organ to a boiling blood-red sky. Argento's excessive use in the past for a hair-brained hears to good effect (eg S-SPIRIT) and the same stunning effect sequence of ORBITAL ON SKY VIVET, but I get the impression here that producer Argento is quoting the final

MY TIME WITH MARIO BAVA

by Samuel Z. Arkoff

interviewed by Tim Lucas

10th April 1986 and 15th August 1989

SA: Seems to have kept you waiting. It's been a hectic day.

TL: That's quite alright. I've been looking forward to speaking with you for some time. I've been researching a book about Mario Bava for the past decade and made a few attempts to contact you last year, but you were preoccupied at the time with re-releasing *HELLHOLE*. It's only now that I've been able to get back to you.

SA: You're writing a book about Mario?

TL: Yes.

SA: He's worthy of a book.

TL: I'm pleased to hear you think so.

SA: I'll tell you what you need to do though. He's not well known in the States, basically he's better known in Europe and certainly in Italy. I'll tell you who knows more about him than even I do: Fulvio Lucisano, who's a man with whom I've made 50 pictures, an Italian producer and distributor, who is president of ANICA, which is the producers' association of Italy. I can give you his number, he's a very dear friend of mine. I've been to his wedding and everything else.

TL: Why don't we start with your story about how you first became aware of the picture known here as *BLACK SUNDAY*?

SA: We renamed it. It was an unusually cold time of the year in Rome, at a time when it should have been warmer and air conditioning wasn't very well perfected at that time. At a certain time of the year they would turn off a little the heat and turn on the air conditioning, which was, in those days, really no more than a fan system. But once they did that, no matter what happened to the weather you were stuck. It was April or May as I recall, and the heat was turned off and, what with these high ceilings and marble floors, it was the coldest season of a lifetime. We James Nicholson and I sat in this cold screening room at 11 o'clock in the morning with Fulvio, who was presenting us. We had told him that we were looking for some pictures as a matter of fact, we had been involved in looking for Italian pictures since 1959. I'm trying to remember. Do you have a date there?

TL: Yes, the picture was made in 1960.

SA: It was the year then, after we'd first come here. We'd picked up one of those strongman pictures with Steve Reeves, and we were looking for more theatrical releases. It was as cold as a sun of a bitch and then this picture started. Black and white and everything. Cold as we were, we knew that we were in the presence of a real picture-maker. It was a terrific picture, even though we saw it in Italian with Fulvio acting as our interpreter, he would chime in from time to time to make it more understandable and his isn't always a satisfactory way of seeing a picture. But it was a first-class picture from a

suspense-horror angle... that's all I can say about it.

TL: The film's violence was fairly startling for its period, so much so that AIP released the film with a warning that children under 14 shouldn't be admitted. How did you react to the violence in the picture?



SA: Well, to me, there are two kinds of violence: violence that is real, and the violence that's unreal, which is the kind you find in this picture. In the first place, here you're dealing with a period piece, secondly this isn't the kind of violence that you relate to classic movie violence in an era before we started getting our dismembered limbs for example, which is a step closer to what we might call realistic violence.

TL: Even so, here is a film that begins with a spiked mask being hammered into the face of a beautiful woman. I know several kids who claim to have been somewhat traumatised by the movie.

SA: But you must realise that, to some extent, the horror audience goes to these movies to get their jollies. This is not because they honestly believe these things happen. It's like when you go to these pictures and have the standard damsel-in-distress, where the audience calls out to the screen. Horror fans are nuts. They holler out advice to the screen, warnings. The more we're not talking about the kind of horror you might find in a picture like *SALVADOR*, about the realistic horrors of a South American coup. Do you get what I'm saying? The horror fan wants to be terrified. The difference between some of these gruesome cheapies, which brought in things like severed limbs without any originality, the public doesn't really refer to them. It wasn't to be feared. It wasn't to be tolerated, which is probably the more accurate word.

I explain what I mean with what I can remember concerning one of our first pictures, *THE DAY THE WORLD ENDED* back in 1957. My wife wasn't really accustomed to seeing horror pictures back in



● Above: Samuel Z. Arkoff

● Left: Mario Bava

those days, not in a theatre anyway, and I left her alone in her seat to tell the projectionist to turn the sound either up or down and while I was out of the auditorium, she saw some kids, about 8 or 10, see something frightening in the trailer and run to the back, slowly, one by one. You know? When I came back, my wife told me this and said, "They don't like it." I told her, "No, they like it, they're responding to it."

TL: I did exactly the same thing when I was that age.

SA: Of course. So you see, Bava's horror was that kind of horror. It was about as far removed, first place the serious aspect is one thing. In the other place, you know, Bava had been originally a cameraman. And he himself was a cameraman and in the era just prior to the era of expensive special effects, Bava was able to do, in his camera, the same special effects that somebody today would spend millions of dollars to produce. In Italy.

I could see these pictures then and to some degree now, were not seen by the kids. In the UK, and I think we had it, the English speaking rights or all rights in the Western hemisphere, they gave the picture their X Certificate, which meant that children under 18 were not admitted. I mean, you are probably familiar with our Edgar Allan Poe series with Vincent Price?

TL: Naturally.

SA: All these pictures, which played for months and other audiences here, were X-Rated in the UK and had an adult audience for the most part. So fundamentally, the average horror picture made in Europe was not intended for a 13-year class. In this country, of course, the Poe pictures played at cinemas to mature audiences and late on television.

I thought Bava was a great filmmaker, but I always felt it was a mistake to have been born an Italian. You see, the great tradition of horror and suspense goes back to England, even



SA: We — yes, we wanted some cuts. The Italian market — virtually the entire European continent — market, in those days — was a single big market. Nowadays, they may have concession stands as we understand them but back then they had what they call “candy buffers” that would come down the aisle with candy and drinks, during a break they had in the middle of a picture. The first time we saw this the picture ended halfway through with the phrase “Fine Primo Tempo”.

End of Part One (on the screen and “Secondo Tempo” (Part Two)) was how the other half began. All their pictures would run, well the shortest I can recall is 95 while the longest was 120. This was longer than we preferred for two reasons: first we were releasing these pictures generally in combination, or double bills, and a longer picture would be frowned upon by exhibitors because it would take them longer to turn the house over to get new people to fill up on concession. Secondly because they were long, these pictures started slowly, and we didn’t want that either. Two-hour pictures were usually slow as hell. As I say AIP produced a number of pictures in Italy and surrounding areas, but when we sometimes looked at a picture somebody else made we could always see how to effect some favourable changes. In fact, after we became aware of this situation some times after watching the first reels of some of these pictures, we were convinced they wouldn’t be any good. The chief complaint of explanatory stuff, talk, so on and so forth. The action wouldn’t get off the ground and sometimes in the second reel this we looked upon as something inherent in the way the Italians made pictures and of course the American audiences, having much more television than these other countries did at that time, liked their movies to go much faster. The era was past when somebody would go to a house, knock on the door, the butler would say “Just a minute” leave him a note, he’d come back and lead him through the hall. You follow me?

TL: I’m him.

SA: Television helped to create an appetite for cutting through the niceness and

[BARBARA STEELE] had a curious sensuality, almost sinister, in a way — and, on account of that, she made a perfect vampire, though I don’t mean she was a vampire; necessarily. A woman is the perfect victim in a horror picture, and an attractive woman is an even better victim, even more perfect. She was a very attractive woman. I haven’t seen her in years.

though Universal made them into films here in the U.S. in the early ’30s. I was a tradition that sprung from detective and mystery fiction, all of which began as literary traditions in the U.K. But Italy didn’t have that background. Nevertheless, to some degree, the background of horror really doesn’t go even further back — Hans Christian Andersen, or stories told around the campfire — all of these things. Or how about stories I read to my children like *I ANSIE AND GRIF* in which I had to expurgate when the children threw the witch into the furnace. The love and being scared goes back long before films were invented, but the Italians didn’t play much of a part in having traditions and this prevented Bava from being recognised as the talent he was.

TL: So what happened after the screening? You acquired the picture of course, but did you meet Bava?

SA: Oh yes, in fact he came to the screening. He had heard there were a couple of Americans who were interested. He came in quietly toward the end of the picture. I think he’d been told that we were coming, we already had a reputation having made a number of horror pictures, so he was interested in meeting us. He was a man, I guess a descendent of his gift as at that time his English was not very good, he was somewhat embarrassed about it. In fact, I got the impression that he could speak better English than he let on. But we managed to get by with what with Felix standing by and hearing the conversation back and forth, and here you were.

TL: You say that Mr. Nicholson and yourself were impressed by the picture. Do you recall what you paid for it?

SA: We saw the picture, we wanted it, we bought it — my guess would be for under or about \$50,000.

TL: Did Bava when you met him seem proud of his accomplishment? He is said to have been a modest man.

SA: He was a very modest man. He smiled, he was quite happy that we liked it and we were quite effusive about it.

TL: Did you discuss changes for the American market?



● A Barbara Steele lookalike in *BLACK SABBATH*

superfluous. What we had to do with these Italian pictures was to somehow save the information given in the first reel but essentially get rid of the first reel. After a while, some of the Italian pictures would begin with an action scene and then get into the talking, so he could make it have in the second reel. But for the most part, Italian horror pictures started slowly. Basically, we would explain to Bava what we had in mind and he would do it. There was no great problem, he might have to work something over a little bit. In some cases where we didn't think he'd sector understood what we wanted, we would make the cuts ourselves. But somebody like Bava, he could always come up with something right something for later on.

TL: I've noticed, after Bava began making films for you in colour, that there was a strong stylistic similarity between his films and Corman's Poe films, especially in their use of Gothic interiors and irrational white movie exteriors. Was this a case of someone influencing someone else?

SA: I think it was not probably not deliberate. Sometimes that would happen, because as I say we did interest him, and he had problems before meeting us. I don't think any of his pictures had played the States before that I was aware of, even in many foreign countries, and they were made very inexpensively. Then we came along and praised him more than anyone ever had, so I believe he took an interest in us and our market. The Poe series began in 1960 and I know that he saw them, so he may have been influenced by them.

TL: *BLACK SUNDAY* was not only an important picture for Bava, it also made an international star out of Barbara Steele. What could be your observations about her appeal?

SA: I tell you something about Barbara Steele. She had a cat-on-a-hot-tin-sensor, a most sinister in a way, an edge, not so that she made a perfect vampire, though I don't mean she was a vampire, necessarily. A woman is the perfect victim in a horror picture, and apparently we women in even better victim even more perfect. She was a very attractive woman, I haven't seen her in a long time.

TL: She's now a producer for Don Curtis and shared a production Emmy for *WAR AND REMEMBRANCE*.

SA: We, this is pretty good. I really don't know how she got up to having a poster.

TL: Many horror fans remained mystified when she didn't go on to become a bigger star through AIP vehicles. Was she considered for other roles?

SA: I think that she probably would have been. I don't really know. There's nothing I can think of



German poster for *HERAKLES IN THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH*

that would have persuaded us against it.

TL: What kind of success was *BLACK SUNDAY* in the States?

SA: It was successful. I don't have the figures here in hand. We made a good profit on it, we didn't pay an awful lot for it.

TL: On March 6, 1961, a picture released by AIP, *ERIK THE CONQUEROR* was the only exception, I believe. Les Baxter was hired to rewrite the scores. Why was this considered necessary?

SA: Well, the Italians made comparatively inexpensive pictures and had no budget for music whatsoever. There were several Italian musical companies that would provide musical soundtracks free in exchange for publishing and other rights. You would tell them what you wanted and they would say the tracks in, though they'd try as much as they

could to give you canned music, which we would never accept. Much of this was done in advance but since we were doing these films, many of them, as a co-production with Fulvio or with others, we would honour their way of doing things, but exercise as much as we could some influence on it. They would very often write the tracks to reflect the standards of Italy, which asked a different kind of music, and we'd later change the track for the American market, so the Italian and European markets, and we would have different or partly different music, for English speaking countries. We used Les Baxter because he'd written for us successfully in the past and we knew he knew what we asked.

TL: The next film Bava made, which you released, was *ERIK THE CONQUEROR*.

SA: Oh, really? What year did you say you had *BLACK SUNDAY*?

TL: 1960, released here in 1961.

SA: There were quite a few pictures made of that kind, and I think this *ERIK THE CONQUEROR* was made by the same company. What was the name of that company that went bankrupt a few years later?

TL: *Galatea*?

SA: That's it. Yes, they eventually went broke, but we made a number of pictures with them. *ERIK THE CONQUEROR*, I'm not mistaken, was made in Italy. Did you see the picture? I think that picture was made by Galatea, and we picked it up for distribution.

TL: Yes, it was in acquisition. After that came *EVIL EYE*, with Linn Saxon.

SA: Yes, that's one we did.

TL: There's an interesting story with that picture because, as you may recall, the English and European versions are quite



Cameron Mitchell is an unlikely Viking in *ERIK THE CONQUEROR*

different, with entirely different endings and the stories were significantly altered in the dubbing.

SA: Oh, we used to do that at the time!

TL: Most of the changes in *EVIL EYE* were subliminal mentions of narcotics, frigidity and topics along those lines.

SA: That could be a non-specificity recall at the moment. We used to change the dubbing a little.

The first picture we acquired from Italy was a Hercules picture starring Steve Reeves. Hercules was a public domain figure and in fact, Joe Levine picked one up before we did, also with Steve Reeves. We didn't want to come out with another Hercules picture with the same star - he was an American, of course, and if he starred in one and even if they were Americans with Italian-sounding names, we would give them English-type names in the credits because no one here would accept that one as an Italian-sounding strong man. Anyway, getting back to the point, we changed the title of our Hercules picture to *COLOSSUS AND THE BARBARIANS*.

The other picture we picked up we did even more with. It was called *THE SIGN OF THE ROMAN*. We didn't know what we were going to do with it, since it was like that so we dubbed a gladiator into the picture, even though there were no gladiators in the picture at all. So we called it *THE SIGN OF THE GLADIATOR*. It had Anna Lishberg in it. The story of the piece was, originally, that back in the days of the Roman conquest, the Roman legions conquered a domain under the rule of Anna Lishberg and her big *horizontis*. At the same time she was sleeping with the Roman leader, so we took basically the same story but made the head of the Roman legion a former gladiator who, in the dying days of Rome,



think the gladiators who survived their contests in the arena put them into the Roman army. Roman blood going through us were. The Roman mistress was a former gladiator and if he didn't put down his rival, he'd be sent back to his death in the arena. Follow the pattern? In the ads we had his gladiator.

TL: Who didn't appear in the picture?

SA: As a man.

But we would do this. There were other reasons. I don't remember if this was true of Bava but sometimes there were sexual connotations aimed at an adult and once a lot of AIP's pictures were very clean so, especially in the stage of the game, anything that was suggestive of say, playing

around with a corpse - *fornicating* a corpse, you know what I'm saying?

TL: Yes sir.

SA: He, etc., etc. I can't remember whether Bava ever had.

TL: Well, for example in one episode of *BLACK SABBATH* there were a couple of lesbian characters who just seem to be mysterious items in the American version.

SA: We would have had. Remember now we're going back here to the early 60s. We would've taken that sort of thing out.

We were having enough trouble with the time with certain horror pictures because a distributor here used to be a group that was still insisting that only family films. I could never figure what in hell a "family film" was, because I'd been going to pictures since I was 7 years old, by myself, and would go to the movies with my parents only on special occasions, like a birthday. I've been going back at those years. I don't know what in hell a "family film" was but in essence most people thought that a family film was a Disney film and the kids turned it. So we had enough problems. We made *I WAS A TEENAGER WHEN WE LI* and it was a fairly tame picture. Have you seen it?

TL: I'm proud to have a copy in my private collection.

SA: Okay. Well, you know what I'm talking about. It was a very tame picture. But we had these classic ads. How are you going to get people into a theatre without a star or a star vehicle? You see what I'm saying. We had to have these hooks. So in some of these Italian or European films, we took certain things out for our audience. Making them out of bed as it was no other problems when we already had car bumps. So we did effect some changes, yes.

TL: If I am interpreting a problem would be that the material is too age or would you screen what he'd done and suggest changes?

SA: Well, it would depend on whether we got a cut in the situation in time to make it a complete film or if the shooting had already begun by the time we came in.

TL: You don't recall specifically the case of *EVIL EYE* or *BLACK SABBATH*?

SA: No really. I'd have to go back and consult with a lot of different things. We have to understand I'm afraid I've made very little pictures.

TL: Oh, yes, I know I've made a lot.

SA: Well, I've designed all mine when it's his book going to be published?

TL: I don't know.

SA: I saw some Bava when I came out a few months ago. I've been here for the American Film Market. Bava can give you a better idea of what he probably remembers a picture and can put things in better perspective. You really ought to meet him in a year.



● DANGER DIABOLIK - John Pin 'Hip' Lata and Muriela Mell get together

going to write about Bava. There's a guy you
really should talk to.

TI $\int_{\mathbb{R}^d} \varphi(x) dx = 0$ \Rightarrow $\int_{\mathbb{R}^d} \varphi(x) dx = 0$

You mentioned how his relations were
sometimes altered in the last 30 years. I'd
be interested to hear more but I'm not about
the human & dubbing most in pictures.

SA: he learned up to have sound-acted stages, he worked in the tracks mainly. I you were asking, he set of a speech Baya or other from a piece from there, when you would have seen it, the other one he came were speaking different languages and would be not like the M's, is, and directly because of the mixture of languages, her work had to be dubbed otherwise we got voices corresponding more to the image than he could actually give, they would even help him over, he originally in a strike an effect, he would get in the dubbing at different and use different voices in many cases, and even their's voice was well known in his own area. And he did, but it might put up so much money, a hundred thousand, a French one, an Italian, and a Spanish one for Spain, and each of these felt was with some somebody, in the case of the sales, a his own country, so enough have in the speaking one, and a few when speaking French in another

You see what I mean? It's like there was something he was doing with us even from afar. It depended on what they wanted to go on and what we wanted to go on.

They were very apprehensive about dubbing in
Lina's expression of displeasure of his kind.
He must not lose hope or enthusiasm. The
entire show in July will be put on air. He
said in July was the best. They were
making such a fine speaking committee
even though we came in. They were dubbing
even though they had not yet given you
names. These dubbings were his work. You
must have even seen few dubbing
going through among the members we released
with the dubbing in. Because we have
heard with him very much.

There were 4 - he and 3 - in Ropes
expressed - Englishmen with high, square
voices, and they used to do a kind of - not

“We were very fond of Bava. I spread the word about Bava myself for many years. I believe, had he either lived or worked in the US or the UK, Bava might have become as well-known as Hitchcock, at least as a prominent horror director. He had a real feel for it.”

for the American market because the
Americans who were buying many of
these pictures said that they liked
pictures of these aboriginal people
you can imagine how much they were
for when we used to take them back
to New York where they do much
business out of a long speaking voice
and good faces where I met
Savane H. who am and I put in the
pictures because he was a hunter. We used to
bring to every man people we wanted to
take home to show to our friends
to show them and now I don't hunt
because the Indians I met was a hunter
of the same kind. He had a gun and a
bow and arrow and a spear when we
started our trading and he was after
some other while he was going and he
was on his way from me. He was

[illegible]

SA [redacted] would assume in the future we
[redacted] don't know much better. [redacted]

See - We probably would have used her
voice against us if any at all but we thought
the picture for the picture - we don't know
any thing about it

11. There are rumours that AIP co-produced another Ba-film BLIND AND BLA-CK LAF as a screen partner with the Wopner Brothers. Can you verify this?

SA: You mean we didn't do it right? Are
 you sure? You didn't say...

TE: AIP has purchased a film called HITCHHIKERS AND A CAT IN A HAT. That may be what you're thinking of.

SA Right: One you know these pictures better than I do. I'm sure we had nothing to do with it. I would say that the picture was made within our corporate area that the Worker's Union released. We must have turned it down for some reason.

TI Armutzian says Alf proposed to buy a car, you wanted him to make with Boris Karlov and Christopher Lee. It was an adaptation of a TPL aircraft's "The Thunder Horse" engine. St Albans TPL Ref:AY. Do you recall any specific details of the project?

SA From me. I me we will live
 sets p's and we would send out and then in
 some cases it's the. What car was that
 about?"

TI 1, mm. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839,

54 I can't remember
The words of the song. A copy of that script
is somewhere at home.

SA [redacted] finding out of that
would be [redacted] in the [redacted] for [redacted]

THE NAME OF THE SAMPLES WAS 1

SA that was our project. In March of the
 1960s, the summer of sixties for us. For the
 first we did a story and sent some
 of our young black and white
 students and we were making the first
 of the first of the black during the same period
 Spain and Mexico. We were making other
 features here and I would be over here very
 few days.

THE JOURNAL OF THE

SA: M... .. yes, but I won
... .. much better

TE [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] WAY DR
CO. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] THE CTRI DOMES
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] It seems like such an

SALES AND MARKETING: APPROX.

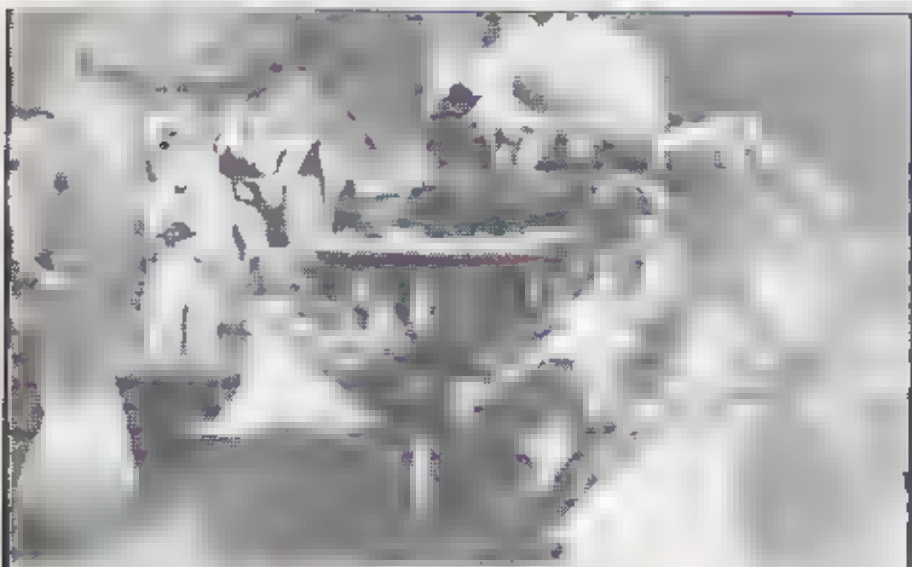
TI 8-1-1988 000334 201 000 47 4

4. We will work with the first person
and use a present with
the present tense. We will use
the present tense. We will use the present tense.

[illegible][illegible]54. Set $\{S_1, S_2, S_3, S_4, S_5, S_6, S_7, S_8, S_9, S_{10}\}$ to be the set of all 10 strings of length 10 over the alphabet $\{0, 1\}$ that contain exactly five 0's and five 1's. For example, $S_1 = 0010110101$ and $S_2 = 0101010101$ are in the set. Let S_i and S_j be two strings in the set. Let $d(S_i, S_j)$ be the Hamming distance between S_i and S_j , that is, the number of positions in which the two strings differ. For example, $d(S_1, S_2) = 4$ because the two strings differ in the 2nd, 3rd, 6th, and 7th positions. Let $d(S_i, S_i) = 0$ for all i . Let $d(S_i, S_j) = d(S_j, S_i)$ for all i, j . Let $d(S_i, S_j) \leq 1$ if and only if S_i and S_j differ in at most one position. Let $d(S_i, S_j) \geq 2$ if and only if S_i and S_j differ in at least two positions. Let $d(S_i, S_j) \leq 2$ if and only if S_i and S_j differ in at most two positions. Let $d(S_i, S_j) \geq 3$ if and only if S_i and S_j differ in at least three positions. 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SA W. L. ... we have ...
H. I. S. ... we have ...
The ... we have ...



● an ALIEN-esque scene from *PLANT OF THE VAMPIRES*

we had commitments to Vincent we had them for about 20 years so we got Bava and knows why we used him and a pair of Italian comics, so Italian it was ridiculous. Their audience was exclusively Italian. They were they weren't even Laurel and Hardy. So we talked to Fulvio and he had these people we had Vincent Price. And the picture was a mish-mash. Have you seen the picture?

TL: Yes.

SA: You agree?

TL: Yes. And so does Vincent Price.

SA: You talked to Vincent about it?

TL: Yes. I did. He doesn't like remembering the picture.

SA: No, I don't either. That picture was never too successful and it was a pain in the ass because we tried to mix genres, languages, movies, every other goddamn thing. As for Bava, it was not really an idea picture for him anyway. Nobody was very happy making it.

I believe there was an Italian actress in the picture who later became an Italian star.

TL: That's right. Laura Antonelli.

SA: And I've, that's right, and I've got to tell you a story about her. My nephew, Ed Rusoff, was working for us in Italy at that time. He still is as an actor, dubber and director of dubbing. He's even been in a couple of Italian pictures. At that time, he was very young and we employed him as basically a gofer. He got friendly with Antonelli and she'd make one came picture and she'd taken her clothes off in it. We threw her thinking that she might just take off some of her clothes and my nephew unbeknownst to us, is over there telling her that she shouldn't be taking off her clothes, that it's undignified. Here's this woman, who's known throughout the world as a very sexy woman, who took her clothes off with impunity, if not immunity, and she wouldn't take her clothes off for us. The only picture she ever made with her clothes on and she makes it for us!

TL: What, in 1966 a bit early for nudity?

SA: I'm talking about the Italian and European versions! We didn't want it for us, but we needed bare bosoms, maybe even a

bare backside, for audiences in Europe.

TL: I understand that CARI BOHMS was a sequel not only to the first *GOLDFUMI* film, but also to one of the AIP-TV releases, *THE AMAZING DR. GILDI*. *MAFIOSE CONTRA GLI UCCIDERE* 1965. It also starred Frazer and Clelio, who played the same characters in both films. You didn't know this?

SA: I'm not saying I didn't. Did he come before or after?

TL: *THE AMAZING DR. G* came first.

SA: Might be a coincidence. I don't really know.

TL: There are rumours that Bava didn't complete the film himself, but that it was completed in the editing room by Louis Hayward and others.

SA: I don't think that's true. What might've happened is that a few pick-up shots were done over. It was made for the American market but there was a so-called Italian version. It's possible that Deke Hayward, who worked on a lot of our European productions, may have filmed a couple of scenes, but you can't make anything out of that. It's not as if he replaced Bava.

[INTERUPTION]

SA: We're going to have to wrap this up in a minute or pick him up some other time. I've got to go. What do you got?

TL: Two questions.

SA: Go ahead.

TL: AIP released *THE YETI* AND *THE EVIL ANTS* *THE SAVAGE* in 1969. It started as a project for Mario, but he left after some production disagreements and was replaced by Antonio Margherita. Are memories of that one? It was made in 1968.

SA: If I was our picture, I was just something we picked up. About 1969, there was another Italian film crisis and there were a lot of pictures available, so we'd pick them up wholesale, dub them in Italy, we'd set up our own dubbing facility in Rome by that time and we'd stream them to television. I don't have an recollection of his particular picture.

TL: Last question. How would you assess Mario Bava's contributions to the history of AIP?

SA: Well, I think he was important in the horror area. I don't think he was as important to AIP as, say, a big name like Cronin who was a lot of the time. I don't think he gave him a kind of official name. Bava certainly been more important to us, but there was the Italian need we talked about. His own home country was not that hot on horror pictures, it's a mass as though he was a prophet dishonoured by his own country. We didn't ask him, he but's was a little known. We were very late. Bava, I spread the word about Bava maybe for many years, I believe. I think he either lived or worked in the US or the UK. Bava might have become as well-known as Hitchcock

at least as a prominent horror director. He had a real feel for it.

TL: Do you have any personal memories of him?

SA: I don't know too much about his family, but I remember meeting his wife once.

TL: What do you remember about her?

SA: I don't really remember. But Bava never had the stature he deserved. He got into television after a while, as I do, sure you're aware, and he did quite well for himself as I understand it. I understand that, when you come right down to it, he never got the recognition he deserved from his own home country. I dare say he never got the same recognition as Dario Argento has had since that time. Part of that was because he grew up in it, it was not something the Italians were using on the same scale as they do now with Argento. You can say Argento is different and in a sense, he is, but he has appeared for the younger audience, and in part to his use of music which I really can't sing. Well, I won't put it that way but he makes it very good. And Argento had a few pictures that were really quite good, like that *BIRD IN A CHAIN* *THE CASTLE* or whatever.

TL: *THE BIRD WITH THE CRYSTAL PLUMAGE*.

SA: I would say that Bava was every bit as good as Argento, but he never had that same backing or was fortunate enough to make really useful pictures.

TL: You did invite him on a couple of occasions to come and work for you in America, didn't you?

SA: Yeah, we tried to get him. But he was basically an Italian and a top secret combination in English. We even tried to interest him in moving and working in the UK, but basically he left for home in Italy, and he was an Italian man etc. before, well, you have to look at the man's career and his situation.

TL: And the fact that he was nearly 50 years old when he directed his first feature.

SA: What's that?

TL: As you said, he was nearly 50 when he made *BLACK SUNDAY* which was his first feature.

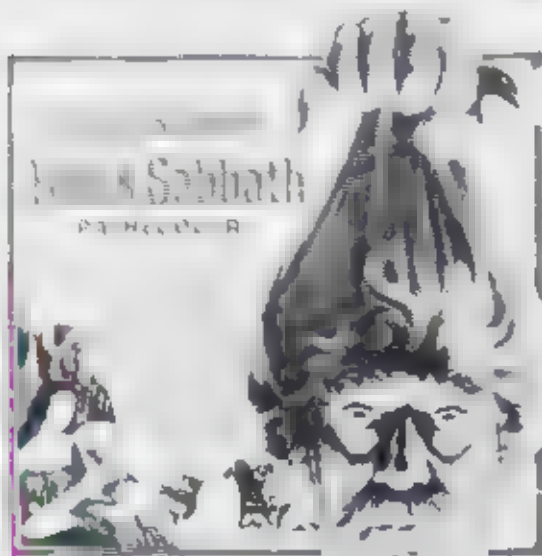
SA: That's right. I've forgotten. You see, maybe if he had been 30 or even 35, he could have done it. *BLACK SUNDAY* was no great success in Italy and we probably made a bigger noise about Bava than anything would you say that's true?

TL: Sure.

SA: Well, we thought, well, you were very kind of him and I think I had been born in the United States or had come to the United States in an early age or even the UK, that he would have become one of the most prominent makers of films, especially in that era before expensive special effects. He could do it cheap. So my own testimony of the thing is, I held him in high regard, he just didn't have the opportunity. We did more for him than anybody did, but we really couldn't do any more for him than we did because his native audience in Italy didn't especially appreciate his efforts.

As his hero, Bava was first class.

Copyright: Tim Lusk. This interview was conducted for Tim's forthcoming book, *The Haunted Worlds of Mario Bava*.



MARIO BAVA ~ A FILMOGRAPHY

(Taken from MARIO BAVA by Pascal Martinet. Additions by Gordon Finlayson)

Born 1914 Died 1980

1939	IL TACCHINO PREPOTENTE	(cin)	*
	LA VISPA TERESA	(cin)	*
1943	L'AVVENTURA DI ANNABELLA	(cin)	
	UOMINI E CIELI	(cin)	
1946	DONNE BELLE NELLA PITTURA ITALIANA	(cin)	*
	PACHO VERONESI, PITTORE DELLA GIOIA E DEL FASTO	(cin)	*
	L'ORECCHIO	(cin)(dir)	*
	IL BARBIERE DI SEVIGLIA THE BARBER OF SEVILLE	(cin)	
	ELISIR D'AMORE	(cin)	
1947	IL MITO DI GIORGINE	(cin)	*
	CRISTO IN GERUSALEMME	(co cin)	*
	MUSICA NEL CIELO	(co cin)	*
	PASSAGGIO DEL MARE	(co cin)	*
	LA RESURREZIONE	(co cin)	*
	ANTITEATRO FLAVIO	(dir & cin)	*
	SANTA NOTTE	(dir & cin)	*
	L'EGGENDA SINFONICA	(cin dir & cin)	*
	NATALE AL CAMPO 119	(cin)	
	FOLLIE PER L'OPERA	(cin)	
1948	UNA LEZIONE DI GEOMETRIA	(cin)	*
	L'AUTO NEL TEMPO	(cin)	*
	IL TRUCCO NEL TEMPO	(cin)	*
	PAGLIACCI / LOVES OF A CLOWN	(cin)	
1949	VARIATIONI SINFONICHE	(dir & cin)	*
	LE PORTE D'ORO	(cin)	*
	IL DEMONIACO NEL L'ARTE	(cin)	*
	FANTASIE DI STATUINE	(cin)	*
	PORCELLANA	(cin)	*
	ANTONIO DI PADOVA	(cin)	
	MISS ITALIA	(cin)	
1950	L'AMORE NELL'ARTE	(dir)	*
	DISASTRI DELLA GUERRA	(cin)	*
	LA FESTA DI S. ISIDORO	(cin)	*
	IL PITTORE DI TRASSEVERE BARTOLOMEO PINELLI	(cin)	*
	I NI RAGHI	(cin)	*
	L'OSPEDATE DEL DEDITTO	(cin)	*
	SULLE ORME DI ESCAPIO	(co cin)	*
	VITA DA CANI IT'S A DOG STUFF	(cin)	
	QUEI BANDITI SONO IO HER FAVORITE HUSBAND	(cin)	
	CANZONE DI PRIMAVERA	(cin)	
	E' ARRIVATO IL CAVALIERE	(cin)	
1951	LA LEGGENDA DELLA CROCE	(co cin)	
	IL PITTORE DELLA PRIMAVERA	(co cin)	
	AMORE NON HO' PERO... PERO...	(cin)	
	LA FAMIGLIA PASSAGGI	(cin)	
	LA FAMIGLIA PASSAGGI E LA FORTUNA	(cin)	
1952	GLI EROI DELLA DOMENICA	(cin)	
	UNA CROCE SENZE NOME	(cin)	
	PAPA DIVENTA MAMMA	(cin)	
	PERDONAMI	(cin)	
	VIALE DELLA SPERANZA	(cin)	
1953	VILLA BORGHESE	(cin)	
	BALOCCHIE E PROFUMI	(cin)	
	TERZA LICEO	(cin)	
	COSI' DA PAZZI	(cin)	
1954	LE AVVENTURE DI GIACOMO CASANOVA THE ADVENTURES OF CASANOVA	(cin)	
	GRAZIELLA	(cin)	
	HANNO RUBATO UN TRAM	(cin)	

	BLONANOTTE AVVOCATO	(cin)
1955	LA DONNA PIÙ BELLA DEL MONDO BEAUTIFUL BUT DANGEROUS	(cin)
	NON C'È AMORE PIÙ GRANDE NO BIGGER LOVE	(cin)
1956	ALTO LAZIO PITTORESCO	(cin)
	COPINADO LA NATURA	(cin)
	MIO FIGLIO NERONE NERO'S WEEKEND	(cin)
	CITTA' DI NO LITE	(cin)
	ORLANDO E I PALADINI DI FRANCIA	(cin)
	I VAMPIRI LUST OF THE VAMPIRE	(cin)
1957	LE FATICHE DI ERCOLE E HERCULES	(cin)
1958	ERCOLE E LA REGINA DI LIDIA HERCULES UNCHAINED	(cin)
	LA MORTE VIENE DALL'O SPAZIO DEATH COMES FROM OUTER SPACE	(cin)
1959	CAITIKI IL MOSTRO IMMORTALE CAITIKI THE IMMORTAL MONSTER	(cin)
	LA BATTAGLIA DI MARATONA THE GLORY OF MARATHON	(cin)
	AGI MURAD IL DIAVOLO BIANCO THE WHITE WARRIOR	(cin)
1960	LA MASCHERA DEL DEMONIO MASK OF THE DEMON BLACK SUNDAY	(cin)
	REVENGE OF THE VAMPIRE	(cin)
	ESTHER E IL RE ESTHER AND THE KING	(cin)
	SEDDOCK, L'ERED E DI SATANA	(cin)
1961	ERCOLE AL CENTRO DELLA TERRA HERCULES IN THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH	(cin)
	GLI INVASORI FURY OF THE VIKINGS	(cin)
	LE MERAVIGLIE DI ALADINO THE WONDERS OF ALADDIN	(cin)
1962	LA RAGAZZA CHE SAPEVA TROPPO THE FIVE FIVE	(cin)
1963	LA FRUSTA E IL CORPO NIGHT IS THE PHANTOM	(cin)
	TRE VOLTE DELLA PAURA BLACK SABBATH	(cin)
1964	SETTE DONNE PER L'ASSASSINO BLOOD AND BLACK LACE	(cin)
1965	LA STRADA PER FORT ALAMO	(cin)
	TERROR NELLO SPAZIO PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES	(cin)
1966	OPERAZIONE PAURA CURSE OF THE DEAD KILL BABY KILL	(cin)
	I COLTELLI DEL VINDICATORE RAFFICA DI COLTELLI	(cin)
	RINGO DEL NEBRASKA SAVAGE GRINGO	(cin)
	LE SPIE VENGONO DAL SEMIFREDDO	(cin)
1968	DIABOLIK DANGER DIABOLIK	(cin)
	L'ODISSEA / LE AVVENTURE DI ULISSE	(cin)
1969	IL ROSSO SEGNO DELLA FOLIA	(cin)
	UN HACHA PARA LA LUNA DE MIEL A HATCHET FOR A HONEYMOON	(cin)
	ROY COLT E WINCHESTER JACK	(cin)
	QUANTE VOLTE A QUELLA NOTTE	(cin)
	UNA NOTTE FAI TE DI BUCH	(cin)
1970	5 BAMBOLE PER UNA LUNA D'AGOSTO FIVE DOLLS FOR AN AUGUST MOON	(cin)
1971	ECOLOGIA DEL DELITTO ANE FATTIO BLOOD BATH BAY OF BLOOD etc	(cin)
1972	LISA E IL DIAVOLO / LISA AND THE DEVIL HOUSE OF EXORCISM	(cin)
	GLI ORRORI DEL CASTELLO DI NORIMBERGA BARON BLOOD	(cin)
1974	CANI ARRABBIATI L'UOMO E IL RABBITO	(cin)
1975	MOSE MOSES THE LAW GIVER	(cin)
1977	SHOCK (TRANSFER SENSENCE HYPNOS) SHOCK BEYOND THE DOOR 2	(cin)
1978	LA VENERE D'ILLE	(cin)
1980	INFERNO	(cin)

Announced but not made

	IL VAGABONDO DELLE STELLE IL VAGABONDO DELLO SPAZIO	
	STAR EXPRESS	
	RADICI DI PAURA	
	BABY KONG	
1975	BORDELLA	SFX
1977	LA MARCO MALOCCHIO	SFX

Note * = short film

SHOCK

Blood and Black Lace feature
by Alan Jones

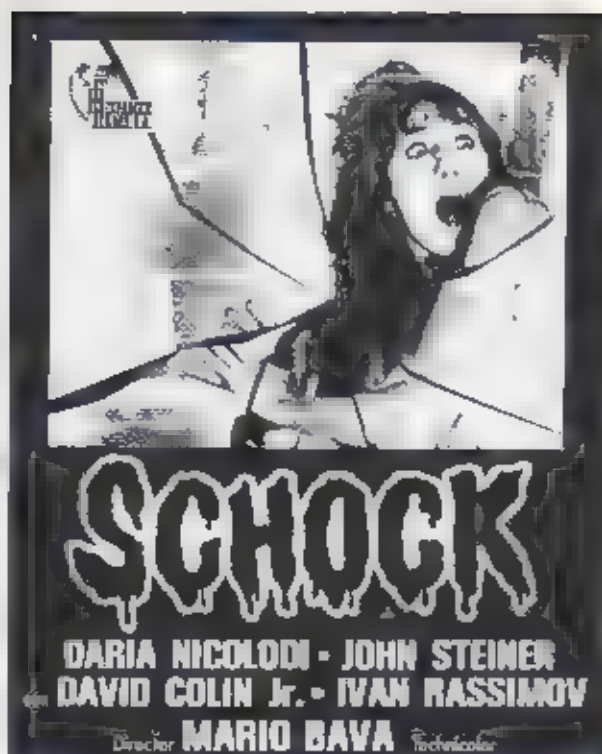
A few myths need clearing up about Mario Bava's last great psychological horror film **SHOCK**. It always sports the subtitles **TRANSFERT SUSPENCE HYPNOSIS** in non-Italian reference books. While these additions are indeed on the original posters they were basically advertising hype along the lines of "sensational suspenseful hypnotic" even though the word *Hypnos* doesn't exist in the Italian language. It's *pnosico* and *Trasferit* means transference. Argento's **TENEBRAE** suffered the same fate: the subtitle **SOTTO GLI OCCHI DEL L'ASSASSINO** is often mistakenly used which only means "under the eyes of the assassin" in the same way **DRAM** **DEMON** or example had "a deep perchance scream" as a copy line. Far more interesting is the original **SHOCK** had no production title. **33 VIA OROLOGIO FA SEMPRE FREDDO** in translation "at number 33 Clock Street it's always cold".

And what about the rumours about Lamberto Bava co-directing **SHOCK**? In a partly published Bava interview I conducted in 1980 he said: "As assistant director I had to help my father a lot because he was... he not so old that he needed me to say a word or cut". Perhaps that is the reason why Lamberto chose **MACABRE** as his debut directing feature. In many respects it's virtually the same film in a non-fantasy context. Being closer to his father during **SHOCK** than at any other time makes sense to suggest he then realised why **MACABRE** is his only good film rests solely in the fact that was mapped out already by Mario's guidelines.

With nothing too is the low ebb Mario's career was at. In Italian Film Industry terms when **SHOCK** was released in October 1977. The only quote I did have gave me which made any sense at all. And if you've ever interviewed him you'd know what I mean: was this line "In Italy you have to die before anyone takes you seriously. Look at Mario Bava". That was only partly correct as to 1980 who has ever tried to find Bava films in video in Rome with contest tracking at the 1977 Italian box-office figures is very revealing. Like many European countries Italy judges success by the number of paid admissions and not by the amount of money taken at

the box office. The top film of the year was Luigi Magni's **IN NOME DEL PAPA RE** with 1,126,658 entrances recorded. **SHOCK** was a number 101 with 45,610 admissions from 150 days in release throughout the year. Other fantasy films the year were **YF** 1,282,342 admissions, **HOL** 1,045,200, **EMMANUELLE AND THE LAST CANNIBALS** 93,969 and **BLACK VENETIAN** 79,693. The only fantasy faring worse than **SHOCK** was Alfonso Brescia's **WAR OF THE ROBOTS** a **STAR WARS** rip-off. And that's amazing when you consider **SHOCK** is strictly ahead of all this competition in practically every artistic area including theme, vision, tone and psychological insight.

I saw **SHOCK** March 10th at the Paris Fantasy Festival. And I can remember this anticipation even better. I was yesterday mainly because I kept and still do keep a detailed diary of everything I've ever done and everyone I've ever met in relation to the Italian film industry. I've plundered these diaries relentlessly over the years to all the known facts I've included in many articles on the King pins of Italian horror. But some reviews and features were never published for various reasons. One being my own fixation obsess on not being shared by magazine editors. Through the



pages of "Blood and Black Lace" Andrew Fca Harrison is allowing me to put a few of these in print for the first time. I haven't edited down, changed or restructured anything and as a result this **SHOCK** review seems rather raw in truth. But it's what I felt at the time and it's quite startling in retrospect for a number of reasons which I comment on accordingly.

Mario Bava proves with his superbly realised new movie **SHOCK** that he and Dario Argento are the only two premier survivors of Italian horror cinema worth taking seriously. But whereas Argento used to plagiarise Bava, the reverse is now true. **SHOCK** pays up-service to last year's major Italian international success **SL. SP. K.** due to its inspired use of a superb Super Stereophonic soundtrack by the group I had throughout the whole film here's a just

audible hum giving a disturbing and unsettling quality to every scene. To that extent the more horrific moments the sound bursts out with such sudden loudness the film lives up to its name and galvanises you to the scene.

Note I never saw the film again with his soundtrack intact. When released in Britain by Eagle Films I asked what had happened. The one impressive fact, many though I have imagined I was and the track had been accidentally wiped while being dubbed into English. It was one of the many even's paid down the unexpected occurrences he had happened on the film turn are apparently moved evernigh while



● Daria Nicolodi about to succumb to her dead husband

"SAVE THE LAST DROP FOR ME"

Dancing with Death in Mario Bava's **BARON BLOOD**

To be brutally honest, **BARON BLOOD** does not represent the apex of Mario Bava's work, not is it riding in the slippery slope from a con-
 Instead, it sees Bava returning to the Gothic genre and legends that permeate his best work: the sumptuous **BLACK SUNDAY**.

It's not precisely dealt with every faceless victims of BLOOD AND BLACK MAGIC - the ingenious methods - murder of TWILLIGHT OF THE BLIND NERVE. How now it has been taken in the way of the same thing. Baren of the film is a transparent as this not only was back had previously hurt an innocent which at the same time 300 years ago on a other side a change in him he is not dead. The Baron house perishes but in his own flames is fire engulfed his castle. Every man he is in Poe - the story of the. Between us we might call it the premonition of ghost of a "A" he succeeds in doing is re-creating the once dead Baron - dead by a accident - in a way like the same is it.

But now the really big show is the
impresario he is to give at his
whip the nation will be beguiled and he
brides himself with the Bixby show
the cause of the Jews is a national
American movement as a nation
and a movement by elements dominant in
is Bixby power and he has a
and every person in the
becomes a nation that is a
same way as the one that is
of the House of the Nation of the
Nation. I have a plan for a nation
Pope and I have a plan for a nation
revive the Nation of the Nation of the
Rising of the Nation of the Nation of the
shadows of the Nation of the Nation of the
church he is a nation of the Nation of the

ominously on, whispers are heard as Eva remembers how the Baron was rumoured to have died as well as the other books. Horror is interlarded with a superb shot of camp, heard and seen, and a blacked-out doorway is seen except for the shining of a Black snake he used a door handle turns the camera zooming in, quickly Pete returns the verse and the handle remains still as the camera zooms back. Even the action of turning is understated as the camera pans to over the glorious sun views afforded by the castle roof. The castle walls are heaving but it's made to empower remains dark.

Brushing aside his wife's protest, Mrs. Peck said he meant to on again he next night in the same room where he had on his first night. "Have a day or two. First time there is no going back as we see a head so far, then we're in the unknow. A sudden gust of wind, as he neared the entry, made him realize the thing he had done and he felt of many guilty shivers and ere he he had moved on. The bewitched mirror and the porch lamp as he saw the dark grey swif as they were into the firm's main impressive building.

[illegible][illegible]

SPECIAL NOTICE

1. 1990-1991

- ☐ A APOPLECTIC STROKES
☐ B CEREBRAL HEMORRHAGES
☐ C CARDIAC SEIZURES
☐ D FAINTING SPELLS

he took 24 of the

A rotting corpse trembles in its tomb impatient for revenge!



BARON BLOOD

JOSEPH ELKE
COTTEN - SOMMER
"BARDON BLOOD"

"BARN BLOOD"



BAINO'S BARBED-WIRE BABIES...

MARIANO BAINO

*Profiled and interviewed by John Martin
With additional material by Andrew Featherstone*



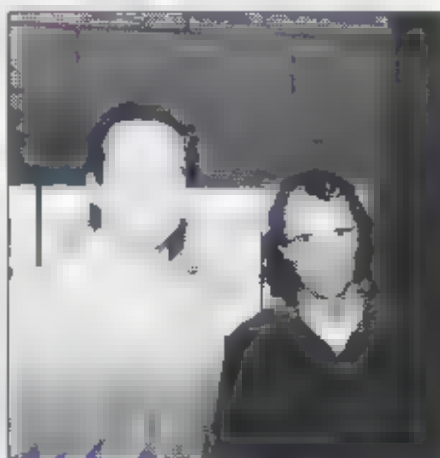
Born in Naples in 1964, Mariano
Longo was named a Rome s
Supermedia Centre for
Cinematography the same year in
Rome. He graduated in 1984 and soon
afterwards started working as assistant
director in an educational series called
ADOLESCENZA E LINGUAGGIO
(Adolescence and Language) on RAI 3,
the third channel of Italian television. In 1989,
he was produced a series on a weekly
consumer programme for RAI 1 and the
following year he was responsible for the
story-telling and realisation of a series
short films entitled *Monte di Capri*. Mr
Averge's pushy relationship with every day
life which had a weekly slot on the
programme. At the end of 1991 Mariano
moved to London and in 1999 he wrote and
directed *DREAM CAR*, a 20 minute
television film starring his brother Fabio for a
fantasy hit series *Freaky Lines* on TV.
It was in 1999 that he wrote and directed
CARTINA. At the beginning of a suc
cessful even at evening drawn in the
feature film series on the screening
festivals and throughout around the country
have created a considerable buzz on the
scene garnering first director's rapid
growing reputation. *CARTINA* has
also now been picked up for international
distribution by a major distributor in 2005.

[illegible]

On August 1941 in the same flight to Da
Argen. was a Two



EVERY YEAR at one of the innumerable social events that have sprung up in recent years on the other side of town on the heels of the Carter-Maxwell scandal, Maxine was presiding over her usual high-society season. I was fortunate enough to be there one or two during the evenings when his guests, the Maxwells, came. One of my good friends, a couple I got to know better after we had dated a while, was there.



● **Admission** gets to meet his hero

JM When you were attending the Experimental Centre for Cryomicrographical and ultrastructural research, you participated in your position for research projects?

MB: They have hit me a block hit you have to make dead serious films, and if you aren't excited in that, then why are you here? Lyle: Films are not proper jobs to them, they should grow out of it and see how they can make films like we were people like Antonioni, not films, he thinks we're making the silver screen obsolete.

He did not make him watch at
the school from he did and get a
new one or two more.

[illegible]

JM How far did your career progress when you suffered?

MSB the first thing I did was a very boring thing... consumer programme... every week I'd be... which was supposed to represent the... and every week he would... and he was... sometimes... The show runs monthly... DREAM CAR... minute long for

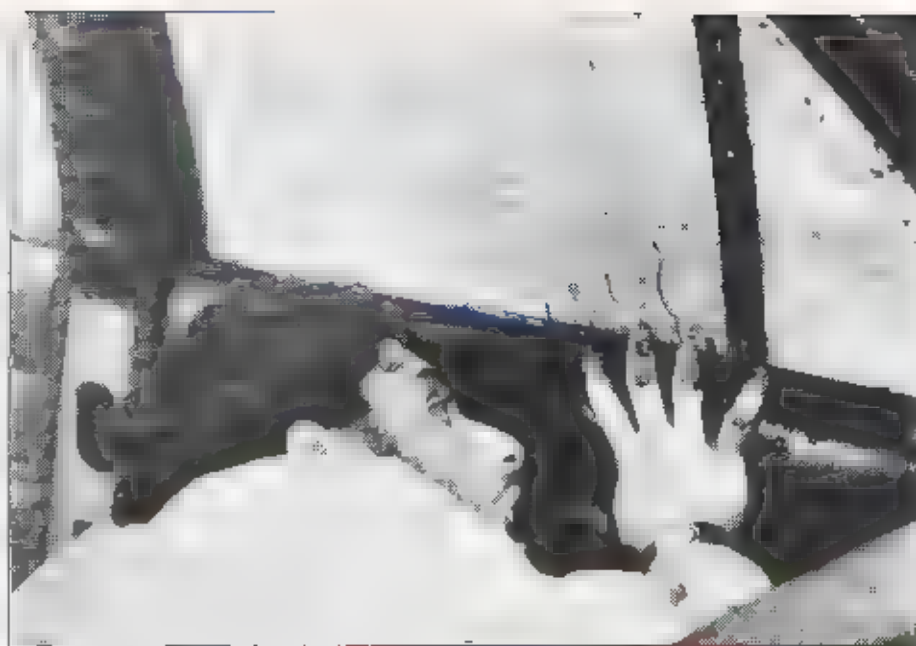
It was about this man, that was obsessed about cars, so one night he just finds this beautiful car in some kind of desolate place and he decides to steal it and he becomes trapped in it and can't get out. The next morning the car has become like a beaten up old wreck, and he's trapped in here and no-one from outside can see him. There's a killing that takes place just outside the car and the police arrive, they're looking inside the car but they can't see anything, and he's the only witness and at the end they just try to get the thing going, they can't see anyone who's seen who did it. They take the car to the junk yard and he just gets crushed inside the car and actually the only one who can open the car is this old tramp who lives inside the junkyard and pulls the pieces from the car. He opens the car and you see his hand going into where the old magnet thing is coming down, as though he's going to rescue the poor guy, but what he wants to do is steal his bracelet. He closes the car door and turns away with a smile on his face so that is a nice twist.

JM This was made in your home city of Naples rather than Rome

MB Yes, for the first channel of state television, and I worked there about a year but as I was doing all the money I was earning, I was saving to come here, so in the end I decided that's a bit stupid, the old faith came in and I decided I'm going to make it anywhere so I just do it, and I made the move.

JM Why to Britain in particular?

MB Well actually it was a series of combinations. The first one wasn't actually anything to do with work. It was because the first time I came over here I met the woman who is now my wife, that was the first reason to keep coming back, and in the end I decided well, I can still make movies somewhere else but I can't find the same relationship anywhere else, so maybe it's better I move to England and keep a life going at the moment and work on the other thing in the



● The unpleasant demise of the protagonist in *DREAM CAR*

mean time, so things are starting to work out quite well.

JM This is your first project over here. What do you find to be the differences between British and Italian crews?

MB Well actually I must have been very lucky because the people working on this are really good. I find them a bit better than in Italy, but I don't know if that's just a question of being lucky here and being unlucky with the people I had in Italy.

JM There is this impression over here that Italian shoots are kind of chaotic and not very disciplined.

MB I don't think that's really true. I just think they look more chaotic. It's more a question of if you're lucky and you find the right people, as in this case where everything's gone well. If you find the right people, doesn't matter where you are, you

could be in Australia and everything would get done and people would spend more time drinking beer than getting the picture.

JM There seems to be a really good atmosphere on this shoot.

MB Yes! I would very much like to carry on working with the same crew. Mark M. is one of our directors of photography, a wonderful man, you've seen the rushes. I've worked with people who've had like for 15 years experience and they've really messed up everything. It's like they don't know the difference between a night and a day, the sort of thing. He's very good and all the other people in the crew are a wonderful team of professionals, they get the job done here really.

JM How did you get together with your producer, Bob Poma, and what's your working relationship with him like?

MB Well it was through mutual friends, we just met and I had the idea for this movie, I told him and he said, 'hey, could he done quite cheaply. At the beginning nothing really got done, then I went to Italy and I started finding a bit of money, the first one was like £500, that sort of got going, I came back and said, 'look, I've got the first £500', so it began to look more and more like we could do something and when we'd raised enough money, we said, 'OK, let's try and do it now and get the people together'.

JM You and Bob carry on your partnership after *'ARI NE LIA'*?

MB Yes, well! My god, that's a difficult one. I've been very good and he's worked very hard, I'm pretty sure he has but in the end there's a bit of a gap, I mean I'm not keeping going because it's not very successful and you know you won't see if he's the people and have a lot of the same money in today. But he's not going to give up, he's the way he was, he's a director, he's a director.

JM When I was watching the rushes, it was like a bit of a disaster, it was a bit of a disaster, you've been

MB Yes, but I would think that it's



● A scene from Mariano Banno's first film *DREAM CAR*

is evident

JM You capture that ambience very well with the lighting and so on. The homage is very well executed

MB That's good. Thank you

JM There's been a bit of talk about *HARDWARE* being an Argento-esque movie, but that just isn't evident on the screen. I think most people are aware now why the makers of that film wanted to obscure its true inspiration, but in the case of *VRIL* it is as far as I can judge from the rushes I've seen, the movie is actually going to live up to the rhetoric

MB That's good. I think Argento is my big influence. I hope to get better than him, obviously, but I mean you've got to start from somewhere and you've got to have an influence. I think that's the influence I'd like to have. The moment I saw *SUSPIRIA* for the first time I thought "That's it! That's what I've got to do!"

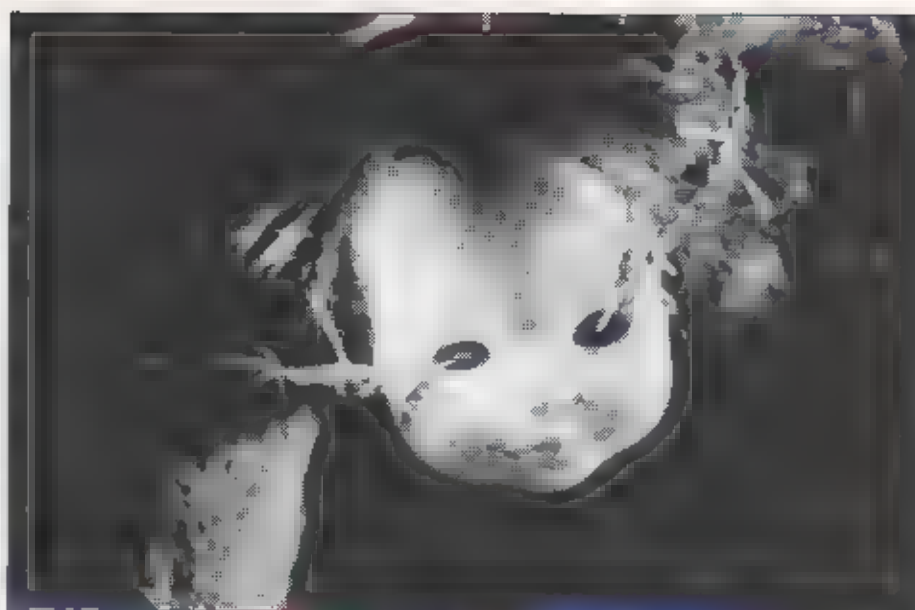
JM And I believe you demanded maggots as a tribute to that film.

MB Someone. I think it was Ron Cummins, the main Irishman who's our second-lead, told me that he would be able to get maggots, and I said we've got to have them because always in a Dario Argento film there is the tracking shot across the floor and there's in the foreground the severed hand or whatever crawling with the maggots. I've got to have this, but unfortunately they didn't perform very well next time. I've got to get better maggots [laughs]. But we had to spend about half a day picking them up again. He was a funny one. You haven't seen the thing in the maniac's lair, have you?

JM Bob's going to show me the maniac's lair next in a minute

MB That's a good one you should watch because it was very funny to do, all these bits of meat brushing past while we were doing the tracking shot, and the poor cameraman was getting looks stuck in his soul and I was saying "Carry on! Carry on!" It was that sort of thing, at the end of the day he was covered with everything from fake blood to soy sauce and all sorts of disgusting bits and pieces but mean that's the fun of the whole thing

JM I was a bit sick while watching the rushes by the physical resemblance of Rosalind Furlong, our protagonist, to Daria Fucini.



“Argento is my big influence. I hope to get better than him, obviously, but I mean you've got to start from somewhere, and if you've got to have an influence, I think that is the influence I'd like to have. The moment I saw *SUSPIRIA* for the first time I thought "That's it! That's what I've got to do!"

MB Yes, the first time I heard when Bob brought her in a tape of the *THE WITCHERD GENERAL* and *THE WICKED MAN*. He said "I don't realise how she looked like she was on a thing, though was she really going for the part? My only thought was "That's the girl!" because she's got the really high cheekbones, and the strange expression, the classic low horror face, the look that makes her perfect for what we're doing

JM Are you optimistic about the prospect of a full-length horror scene? I seem to be in rather poor shape currently

MB I don't know, here's anything really going on, he promised to do a good Dario Argento, though he's having problems. But as far as the other people, I mean for *LALO* there was as much as a bit of his crew, he's a fine everyting, looked like westerns, porno movies, whatever was going and some of them he was very well, where he was going to, I never really considered him, he produced some films but were gh for the time, right or what they were, he's not that kind of person where you say "Oh yeah, that's Lalo Feller" as you do with a Dario Argento film. He's a real good customer, he's got the credit, knows where to

put the camera and knows his stuff, but the thing is he, the horror market has got a bit strange in the last few years, you don't get real horror films released anymore. Obviously, the Italian style doesn't go very well with it. They don't go for half-measures when it's time to go for it and these days people want to go for half-measures, they just want something to be in your living room, you could watch it.

JM Are you going to be compromised by the increasingly stringent censorship around the world?

MB I hope not. It's the choice between making a film for money and keeping them the way I want. I mean doing business has been notorious, it's the sort of thing you can do once but then you've got to get a bit more money. If it's the choice of doing it the way I want or doing it for the big bucks, then then giving up the studio so we can cut and do whatever they want with it, then obviously I would prefer to keep it smaller and more in line with what I think about it. It's just that at the moment it's a bit difficult to get any independent film out there.

JM Bob's told me that you're going to try and sell this to British TV. Don't you anticipate difficulties in making the kind of film that you want?

MB Oh yes, I anticipate difficulties in Britain and even other countries. They're so obsessed with it, it's sex and violence on television, you know. I only wish I could see as well. They may have a chance, but I get in my television, keep looking at everything, they print these on a Sunday Sport, you can see.

JM What would you say to those who claim that horror film makes people more violent?

MB I was just that there was a lot of talk about when films did exist at a time and people were a bit more violent but they are now. I mean Jack the Ripper was around doing his thing without having to see a Fredrick Krueger's thing any more. It's just that it's easier for every one to blame video because everything's on a tape. At the same time, I'm not responsible for the video, it's not that people seek something because they respond to it, but these kids see a film about something



● Rosalind Furlong in *CARUNCULA*

stealing something, that's why they go out and kill!" When they do these gang killings and people say "Oh yeah, straight out of a movie", well—maybe they would have killed someone in a different way, but it so—would have happened, otherwise we would have had 2,000 years of history without any killing then suddenly there I go, the horror movies come out and everybody starts killing, and obviously that's not what happened. They have to blame something, and they hunk by blaming the video, they can sort of be the problem. In a way, it makes it easy for everybody they think "My problems will go away, my children will be alright and I'll be happy." It's not a very good excuse to everybody, that's why they don't. They don't know what they're talking about. I remember reading this article about a killer who claimed he could hear the voice of Michael Myers from the HALLOWEEN movies, but Michael Myers never speaks! They just don't know what they're talking about—they talk about them without having seen them.

JM Going back to the thing about the TV sales, and also the decline of the Italian horror film, a lot of people believe that the former has been the cause of the latter.

MB Yes, I know. It's just I think, that there's nobody in Italy at the moment who can do anything, just Argento. Yes, here's Michele Soavi—who did one just by mistake. I think, because of what he's done since, and Lamberto Bava's been going downhill, as the way. If you want to make this TV movie route, why should someone come in, you're making money when they can get 5000 guys who are better at it than you? I don't want to hurt anyone in death. I just hope that people who like horror movies will like this, and that we can get back that idea that horror movies should scare people.

JM Neither you nor Bob are very fond of jokes, horror movies are you?

MB [Pauses, disgusted face] Oh no, I think horror movies are to adults what fairy tales are to children—they just save you from a king about real death. You've got to die, and that's not a very nice thing—but we

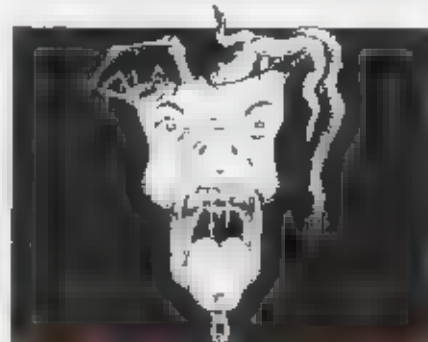
"I think horror movies are to adults what fairy tales are to children, they just save you from talking about real death. You've got to die, and that's not a very nice thing—but I've read the original versions of the fairy tales, and they're horrible, full of people being crushed to death, and all of this, it's just the form of the thing. But then, we need a version of that for people who are out of the nursery, and that, I think, is the function of the horror film."

read the original versions of the fairy tales, and they're horrible, full of people being crushed to death, and all of this—it's just the form of the thing. I would think of the wolf being opened up at the end—"The Red Riding Hood" is horrible, but because it's in the form of a fairy tale it's OK. But then we need a version of that for people who are out of the nursery, and that I think is the function of the horror film. You've got to have ways to deal with all these things, but you don't want to happen to you—you see them, you're shaken, and distressed for a few days, then you're OK. For the next one, you feel a little better.

I want people to come out of the cinema looking over their shoulders, and go home thinking "What's hiding behind there?" because at the moment you come out thinking about your popcorn. It's like comedy films which he takes that would be funny, and horror films which scares are funny, some sort, but they're not horror films, that's the whole point. I don't know what the point would be, it's like it's make bad films and no-one cries, if you go for an emotion you've got to do it, to go to the way, so that's the only thing I hope to do, he's.

Whether Mariano Banti can go all the way and emulate or even surpass his Spaghetti Spine ancestors remains to be seen, but it's heartening to think that he proceeds straight if Italian horror is still weathering a creative soiling, though we haven't heard from Banti yet.

Or even further ahead? Serious negotiations are carried on one way for Dan's feature comedy **DARK WATERS**, a blasphemous concoction of psycho-crazies and over-the-top scenarios to be co-financed from Russian sources and shot in the Soviet Union. Watch this space for further details.



● Rosalind Furlong and Jonathan Jaynes in **CARUNCULA**

CARUNCULA

70 minutes, Colour

Written and directed by Mariano Banti. Produced by Anthony D'Amico. Produced by Mark K. Smith. Music: Sheldon Thomas. Edited by Andrew Mark. Starring Rosalind Furlong, Jonathan Jaynes, Michael Sarrazin, Mother, Peter Wadsworth, Gregory Walter.

DARK WATERS

70 minutes, Colour

Director: Mariano Banti. Written by Mariano Banti. Produced by Andrew Mark.

Starring Rosalind Furlong, Jonathan Jaynes, Michael Sarrazin, Mother, Peter Wadsworth, Gregory Walter.

Status: In progress. Release date: TBC.

The US/Italian Video Scene

A Blood and Black Lace report by Craig Ledbetter

Italian video releases here in the US are practically non-existent (at the moment). With the demise of such low budget labels as Wizard Video, Prism and Video Gems, very few foreign genre films surface. Imperial Video is about the only label consistently releasing Euro-Horror: GHOSTHOUSE and OBSESSION: A TASTE FOR FEAR.

The US video customers (and reviewers) are obsessed with "A" titles. Reflecting this is the typical video outlet which will have 20-30 copies of each title in the Top 20 rental section. By spending all the bucks on these safe-fire rental "hits", there is very little money left for purchasing "B" and "C" type titles. For fans of Italian horror films, the only RRs can be looked on as the Golden Age Jack-Pot: 10-20 Italian horror films would debut in a month. These days we may get that many in an entire year.

Scout24 Cinema's is a low budget major video label out of California that does in PD, Public Domain, Titles and a sub-label for fans of 60s and 70s black and white horror. Recent titles include LONG HAIR OF DEATH, BLACK SUNDAY and WEREWOLF IN A GIRL'S DORMITORY, with more promised in the future. Other low budget major video labels include Video Mania; they have Paul Naschy's CURSE OF THE DEVIL (aka EL RETORNO DE WALPURGIS), American Erotic cinema: ATOM AGE VAMPIRE and something weird: SUPER ARCADES: THE FACELESS GIANTS.

A lot of US fans are not aware of the many foreign language video labels that proliferate throughout the country. They are usually huge priced and offer many fine enough versions of the Italian horror films that are butchered for the English language release. Titles include PRIMO ROSSO (30 minutes of extra footage), SETTE NOTTI IN NIENTE (27 minutes of extra footage), MURDER ROCK (never released in the US), TENEDELE (27 minutes of extra footage).

SOLA DI GIU' VOMINI PECE does not contain any gore footage shot for the US release known as SCREAMERS. II MITO DEL DIAVOLO (not available in the US in English), LA MORTE HA I SUOI SCARIS, A ASSASSINO, LA DEATH SMILE, LA MURDERER and only available in TV with 6 minutes of gore and nudity missing. L'ASSASSINO COSTRATTO UCCIDI ANCORA (Isabelle Huppert Cozz) is LA NOTTE LE LON DIABLOS (see review). The film was expanded to feature-length based on the WEREWOLF episode from BLACK SABBATH and the delicious scene IL CAMPING DEL TERRORE (BODY COUNT) by Ruggero Deodato. All of these

can be found in the US if you are willing to overcome the foreign language difficulty.

However, you know how glib US fans are about anything not spoken in their own language. Okay, fine. There are still more Italian horror horrors available to US video fans and best of all they are dubbed in English. Over the past 10 years, the Spanish speaking population in the US has increased exponentially. This has resulted in not only Spanish language videos proliferating but imports from Venezuela (South American 90% of these titles) Venezuela and the US are on the same television standard, by the way, are in English with Spanish subtitles. Not only are these titles available but many have never been released in video in America. In any one case, see how we never will be the same catalogue a few of these prizes.

1 GREAT WHITE

This is the film that will never be legitimately released in the US. A JAWS rip-off directed by Tom Savini (aka GOREA). WHITE was released here only by Film Ventures which were promptly sued by Universal. Send us and forced to withdraw the film immediately. The film featured a great performance by Val Morrow.

2 CANNIBAL APOCALYPSE

Out here as INVASION OF THE FLESH TUNTERS. (A is, of course, more explicit). However, this is still not a very uncensored as the trailer for this film, found on

other Venezuelan releases, contains even more gore!

3 FOLDS OF THE FLESH

An extremely graphic early 70s Giallo with Fernando Sancho, among others, this film has so many flashbacks with in flashbacks you need a chart to keep track of where the hell you are. The biggest gross out scene occurs when Fernando Sancho takes a bath.

4 SAVAGE ISLAND

Better known as THE GIRL MURDERER or ANTHROPOPHAGY. This Venezuelan video version has 7 minutes extra gore, including the final dismemberment) missing from the US video.

5 MOUNTAIN OF THE CANNIBAL GOD

Wizard Video released this as SLAVE OF THE CANNIBAL GOD and cut out over 15 minutes including the scene pulling out a graphic dissection. This 18 minute version makes you realize just how hard up Stacey Ketch was for drug money.

6 THE NEW YORK RIPPER

This one has a spatter ganza had been famous for the sex scene missing when it landed up here (legitimately in V market). Now these poor fetishists can seek out the Venezuelan version.



● Lucio Fulci's (or as the Spanish press book puts it, Fulci) NEW YORK RIPPER

7 WEREWOLF WOMAN

This laughable softcore horror item with the great stoneface Frederick Stafford contains 5 minutes extra in the flesh and blood sections of the film for a new running time of 100 minutes

8 ZOMBIE HOLOCAUST

Aquarius Releasing added a prologue and new music score and turned this into DR BUTCHER MD. Here it's minus all that. Either way it's a classic however

9 SOLAMENTE NERO

Craig Hill is a priest who witnesses a murder and fears for his life. Stefan a Cassin from SUSPIRIA also stars. The score by Capriani is a direct rip-off of Goblin's SUSPIRIA. Antonio Bido (WATCH ME WHEN I KILL) is the director

10 THE HUMANOID

Richard Kiel, fresh from success as Jaws in MOONRAKER, gives his usual robotic performance in this cheap sci-fi flick. Great score by Ennio Morricone

11 LAST MIDNIGHT TRAIN

Infamous rip-off of LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT. Set on a train, this film is not available in the US though the similar plotted TERROR by Aldo Ladi is

12 THE ANTI-CHRIST

This is out here in the US in a drastically shortened version and retitled THE WIMPYR. It even has a few scenes cut of order which really makes for a confusing viewing experience. The VHS/DVD pre-record is the original cut

13 CRIMES OF THE BLACK CAT

Stars Anthony Steffen and Sylvia Koschima in the lurid sex and violence pot-boiler based on Edgar Allan Poe's THE BLACK CAT. Never released on US home video

14 EVIL EYE

An all-star cast of Italian vets such as Anthony Steffen, Alan Cooke, Richard Conte and Eduardo Fajardo are featured in this loose EXORCIS, rip-off. Star Jorge Rivero is possessed by a killer spirit and does most of the cast

15 REVENGE OF THE LIVING DEAD

This over the top French horror film features such graphic gore sequences as a pregnant woman having her skull dug off resulting in her unborn octopus being the fruit and another woman getting a long sharp sword shoved up her arse in a rape. Loads of softcore sex in a film you would swear had no sex at all. I did not know the French had them to produce sleaze like this

A VIDEO EYE OVER ITALY

By Max Delia Mora

The video scene in Italy is relatively young but has rapidly increased and improved. Now in every city even the smallest centres, there are lots of video shops where you can rent or buy video cassettes and, for the sleaze fans among you, you can find quite a few shops offering exclusively hard core porn movies. Usually these places are heavily crowded

Some of the first now long gone video companies, were offering cheap exploitation titles, such as IL SAU WOLF OF THE SS, THE CREEPER aka RITUALS, the Italian PATRICK rip-off PATRICK VIVE ANCORA or GLI ULTIMI GIORNI DEL DESERTO aka DESERT TIGERS, amongst others. If you are lucky enough you can buy these tapes very cheaply at around £1.0, but they are pretty hard to find as video shops do not usually stock them. But not only are these tapes difficult to locate. Even freshly released movies are not available anywhere. I am talking about KILLING BIRDS, FRATTI ROSSI aka THE RED MONKS, the French sex and gore SEXANIMALS and Lucio Fulci's ZOMB. Strangely enough, this and many others are no tape but apparently very few shops are interested in getting them. While you can find one of ROGER RABBIT or RAMBO III, ZOMBIE HOLOCAUST is a most collector's item

The video shops, however, will sell and rent only "safe" titles that will return fully and with a large interest. The price of a tape, so they maintain the interest in the lesser known titles that will more surely gather dust on the higher darker corner of a shelf. The

problem is that in Italy there never existed an appreciation culture for the horror, in any of exploitation movie. While the mainstream big budget film gets its attention, the little B movie does not get too much interest from the big audience while it is followed by only a restricted loyal circle of fans. Very few people know movies like BLOOD BASTARD, well known directors like Ramer, Carpenter or Cronenberg or cult names like Andy Miligan, Ray Dennis Steckler or Frank Henenlotter. Even magazines like "Fingoni" or "Ginezone" are available only in very few big cities like Milan or Rome. Anywhere else they are totally unknown. The popular image of horror movies, of the vampire comes in the form of "vighi" Freddy Krueger, the new idol of fanatical teenagers. And the new cinema magazines in the Italy here does not exist a magazine completely dedicated to the horror/fantasy genre. There are rumours about a new one soon to be published but for ages I have heard this. I want to help to change the situation. As a result the scene is getting pretty boring and sterile, but if it interests you, I will cover for a future issue of "Blood and Black Lace" the Italian "American Fangs" scene. I can know through Andrew

Back to the video scene, what about censorship? Well, some movies are cut but not this much. The ones I'm sure about censorship are CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST (the rape scene is slightly shortened and there could be some other minor cuts that I do not know about), CANNIBAL FLECK (the eye gouging and the dismemberment have cut) and the badly censored RATS



● Lucio Fulci's THE BEYOND — cut even in his homeland!

Review



DEMONS 1, 2 and, er... 3!



DEMONS (1985)

There was quite a bit of excitement generated by DEMONS when it was first released in 1985. It was produced by none other than Dario Argento himself and directed by Mario Bava's son, Lamberto. So was the finished article the masterpiece everyone had hoped for? Well the answer is no, but that's not to say the film doesn't have something to offer.

DEMONS begins with an assorted group of people attending a movie theatre in the Metropolis where they expect to see demons on the screen and end up not only meeting them face to face but in some cases becoming one themselves. The most striking thing about the creatures is, unlike the zombies of Romero's NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, these things move fast. There's no standing around discussing the weather when the demons are coming after you, you either act or die. And speaking of acting, the usual deficiencies of Italian productions apply here with the quality of the performances ranging from the good to the inept. Bava certainly creates a sense of claustrophobic tension as the audience becomes entrapped within the confines of the theatre and Claudio Simonetti's music provides the perfect impetus to carry the action along.

One thing that can never be said about DEMONS is that it's boring as there is always something happening to grab your attention. Also there are several well staged sequences and when one of the surviving humans takes up a sword and runs through

the auditorium on a motorcycle dispatching demons by the dozen, could we the audience really ask for more? The surreal elements which pervade the story are very welcome and the advent of the helicopter crashing through the roof is undoubtedly as big a surprise to us as to those trapped in the cinema.

Without question, the make-up and special effects by Rosario Presopin and Sergio Stivaleri are excellent providing many of the film's best moments. And of course, the now famous backbursting scene is a highlight.

On the strength of this production the skills of Argento, the producer, is not to be taken lightly and Lamberto Bava shows he has inherited at least some of his father's talent.

DEMONS 2 (1987)

This sequel to DEMONS suffers from the familiar drawback of follow ups, it has already retreads the same ground its predecessor had explored far more compellingly in the original.

Admittedly, the location has been moved and we now find ourselves in a multi-storey apartment building where our old friends, the demons, return via the television sets. The plot follows the precedent laid down by the first film as the humans become trapped inside the tower block and are pursued by family and friends who have been unfortunate enough to become infected.

In fairness, the film is not at all bad, but the feeling of having been there before persists as there is no real attempt to do something different with the storyline. The score by Simon Boswell contains a first rate theme but sadly the music used during the majority of screen time is not amongst his best work.

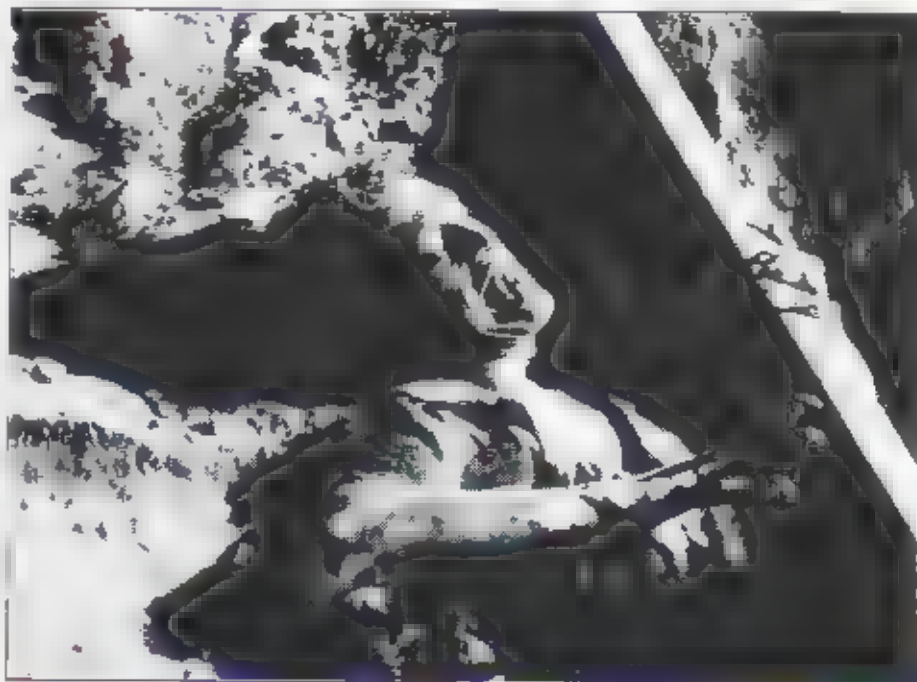
Although Argento and Bava both retain a better original capacities as producer and director, neither seems inspired sufficiently by the idea to really make something worthwhile from it. Naturally the film does have some good moments, but they are far less frequent than before and for the most part derivative.

If you enjoyed DEMONS and would like some more of the same, then undoubtedly you will not be disappointed by DEMONS 2, but if you were hoping to see the original concept developed, I'm afraid this film just does not deliver.

DEMONS III — THE OGRE (1988)

Made by Lamberto Bava as one of a series of films for television, DEMONS 3: THE OGRE has nothing whatever to do with the first two "Demons" films. Obviously someone of high intellect came up with the notion that the film would sell better on video if they latched on to the "Demons" name.

So what we actually have here is a story concerning a writer who whilst staying at a villa with her husband and young son,



● A trapped demon struggles to get free in the opening scenes of DEMONS 2

discovers that a childhood nightmare has returned to haunt her and has in fact become a reality. There are no demons in the film, except perhaps those in our dreams, but the ogre of the title most definitely does appear dressed in period costume and looking quite menacing.

The music of Simon Boswell, as mentioned in the review of the soundtrack, is the film's major strength, evoking a poetic reverie which sadly is not supported by the visuals.

The meandering developments of the narrative and the basic flaws in the plot become increasingly irritating and we are left with a rather dull experience when on y picks up now and again. All of the memorable moments are created by Boswell's music and undeniably when the music is playing you truly expect something dazzling to happen, but it never does.

The one question that finally must be asked is, does Lambert Bava really possess any true talent as a film-maker? His output has been erratic to say the least. There are no easy answers. We will just have to keep watching.
Mark Hockley



● Yet another demon from Demons 2

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SOUNDTRACKS

TWO EVIL EYES

Music Composed by Pino Donaggio

Whilst writing my piece on the music of Dario Argento included a "Blood and Black Lace" #1. I commented that it would be nice to see Argento go back to a more complete approach to scoring his films, rather than the fragmented, if very effective, use of various source music utilized in PHENOMENA and DEMONS 1 and 2. So, if you can imagine, I was pleased to hear that his would indeed be the case in his collaboration with George A. Romero, TWO EVIL EYES. Also, the choice of Pino Donaggio as composer appeared a good one as I have admired his work since the early seventies when he first entered the film music scene with Nicolas Roeg's DON'T LOOK NOW.

Donaggio's score is as you would expect, split into two segments representing each director's story individually. Using the track, using on the soundtrack album, we begin with "Dreaming Dreams", a synthesized percussive piece complete with lyrics supplied by Peter Steffan. I was hoping that under the guidance of Argento, the composer would try something a little bit different and this track does not entirely disappoint, providing an "Other" theme of somewhat overtones in the album. Track two, "The Pit and the Pendulum", recalls Donaggio's earlier work, with swirling violins creating a nicely atmospheric ambience and a few unusual touches, notably in his use of electric guitar. The apparently titled "Watch the Axe Anathema" is another effective percussion and strings composition, slightly Herminianesque in places. Next we have "The Little Town", using a synthesizer, one which must have been inspired by Philip Glass occasionally.

"Edge of Time" is quietly foreboding, introducing "Aqua Spontanea", a traditional tune which serves as a counter theme for the dark deeds which take place on screen. After his "Aqua Spontanea" gets a very evocative rendering from the London Camera Orchestra, capturing the strangely eerie quality of the music, in fact this is probably Donaggio's best revelation on the film's soundtrack. Track seven, "The Photographer", evokes "Dreaming Dreams" with the violins, adding a subtle guitar for reasonable effect. The next offering, "Sunset", is jazzy with saxophone and certainly not my idea of captivating. Even the unmythical headline does little to evade the boredom. There's a bit of every hat in the line track, "The Mercies", which doesn't really do that this theme continues through "The Family Hacksaw", a typical Donaggio track, which nicely exemplifies his unique style.

The Back cast is more of the same, although slightly less interesting, with the "Flash" of something which reminded me of the original Lombardi's THE WAY THE EARTH SHOOK WHILE all things May be it's not the.

Finally, we have "The Ending", with definite but not too much of a theme reminiscent

PSYCHO. Although this is fairly enjoyable, I is slightly anticlimactic.

All in all, the first half of TWO EVIL EYES is not without some merit, although as always you hoped for more.

And so to side two and George A. Romero's contribution to the film. We begin with "The Others", an intriguing opening utilizing voices and strings. "Preparing the Murder" follows with a choral chant, but sadly does not develop the idea and has a bit of a lack of a very brief.

Moving on to "The Signature", the composer incorporates a guitar theme in the somber atmospheres. This track is pleasingly understated and works very well. The interesting "Ted Psychomaniacs" only really comes to its end way through, capturing the ominous sense of what is to come. However, it gradually deteriorates, becoming inept and rather conventional.

Unexpectedly "Visa" track five on side two of the album is a poor example of standard horror film background music and although it works perfectly well in conjunction with the visuals, musically it has nothing much to offer. Beginning with "Hypocrite", Hypocrite unfortunately does not deliver musically speaking, relying on much on track and lesser methods of creating emotion.

Track seven, "Living or Money", meanders along, picking up half way through with some interesting melody, although it is brought to a halt in tempo towards the end only works as a device and is not particularly well done. While I suppose could be it more as the title track, "Two Eyes" introduces the choral and these provide the best moments of side two. Sadly, once again the piece ends off towards a dissatisfying conclusion.

The last track, "The Living Dead", is short and is not much in the way of a finale.

Certainly, Romero's role is the lesser of the two musically and many of the ideas in both parts of the film remain unfulfilled. So, if all works well enough and certainly does no harm to the film. In some ways, his soundtrack should come as no surprise considering Donaggio's gradual decline since his auspicious beginning when he excelled on films such as EAT DRINK AND BE MERRY and PREPARED TO RISK IT ALL. In fairness, Pino Donaggio is still an impressive composer, but it would seem that after his years of experience in the Hollywood film world, he has learned to suppress that and innovation and replace it with professionalism.

DEMONS III — THE OGRE

Music Composed by Simon Boswell

Simon Boswell has been scoring the films of Lambert Bava for several years now, most notably on DEMONS 2. This collaboration is a far cry from the title DEMONS 3, although a less nothing to say with the first two films gives Boswell another chance to experiment with his strange gothic rock. Tracks from the film appear on the album "The Living Dead", which includes a music by Boswell, only three other Lambert Bava films.

Blood and Black REVIEWS



Un Gatto Nel Cervello: I Volti del Terrore A CAT IN THE BRAIN: FACES OF TERROR

aka NIGHTMARE CONCERT

1990

Director: Lucio Fulci. Written by: Lucio Fulci, Giovanni Simmetti, Antonio Tentori. Director of Photography: Alessandro Grossi. Special FX: Pino Ferranti. Music: Fabio Frizzi.

Cast: Lucio Fulci, David L. Thompson, Rina de Simone, Jeffrey Kennedy, Sacha Darwin, Paola Cozza, Maita Longo, Brett Halsey. 86 minutes.

Marketed in Italy with the portentous subtitle "Hitchcock invented chills, but Fulci perfected them" this is the film in which superannuated goremeister Lucio Fulci expanded on his familiar conceit of Hitchcockian cameos to award himself the lead role of the superannuated goremeister Lucio Fulci (though his character is listed as Fulvio in the credits), driven to the verge of a nervous breakdown by the violent content of his own movies. His life invaded by hallucinations of death and mutilation (mostly involving nude girls), Fulci goes into therapy with psychiatrist Bruce Halsey, who convinces him that he is responsible for several real-life messy murders. Predictably enough, Halsey is himself the true culprit, even if Fulci the patient hadn't seen Clive Barker's NIGHTMARE. The obvious inspiration for his plot device, he should have been a cameo by his therapist's name, which appears to be "Dr. Monster".

Fulci's earlier HITCHHICKER DELIRIUM (1972-1983) had addressed the ethical questions involved with scripting violent spectacle as entertainment, albeit in largely throwaway fashion, where he's appropriated concrete usage in personally delectable rambling carps, chewing soliloquies about the interface between cinema and real life violence as a ground for nihilistic unspoolings, limbs are ripped off with chainsaws and amputated heads are heated in microwaves. The director was dubbed the resulting mess his "Blood Testamon" but such pretensions are punctured by the fact his Fulci's facile "HIT" has been patched together not only from SCHUMAS GHOSTS and QUANDO ALICE RUPPI LO SPECCHIO (his 1988 brace, which went unreleased after a chaotic artistic falling-out with producer Alberto Adorni), clips, but also



generous out-takes from various other unrefusable atrocities in medievalist Sylvio Berlusconi's creaking vault of horrors, notably Andrea Bianchi's DO YOU REMEMBER DR. JEKYLL? Mario Bionchi's DON'T BE AFRAID, AL! MARIA WELDON, I KILL YOU! Enzo Marone's BLOODY MOON, and Lucio Fulci's BLOODY PSYCHO, which supplied surprise surprise the shower scenes. Such wholesale pilfering from the oeuvre of other backs would seem suggest that the director, even lacking notable's apocryphous gory matter in the opening sequence, is hindered as a metaphor for the onset of testate Alzheimer's disease.

The gore scenes go beyond anything seen even in Fulci's most notorious and prolific period a decade earlier, when several of his offerings formed the back bone of the ZEPPELS Video Nasties List. They are however rather stolidly executed and underpinned by neither the crazed

levitation atmosphere of his zombie quartet, nor the hard-boiled police procedural milieu of LO SQUARIALORE DI NEW YORK (1982), the Grand Gaignol spins off into the nihilism of acrimonious tormenting anyone of the most cadaverous easily was endings in recent memory, perhaps a long memory after all to the erratic career of Lucio Fulci.

Tom Pater

BROKEN MIRRORS/BROKEN MINDS - THE DARK DREAMS OF DARIO ARGENTO

"Bad luck isn't enough, by broken mirrors, but by broken minds." Franco SENSI (LA)

I have of an whilst in the grip of the wonder and terror that is a Argento movie found myself musing about the myriad of his films, wondering who is the quintessential Argento and who inspires him to make such films and above all, what are his motivations? >



These are the questions writer Marjorie Matland asks herself, in *Broken Mirrors/Broken Minds*. The Dark Dreams of Dario Argento: a new hardback published by Sun Tavern Editions, P.O. Box 982, Lonsdale, E1 9LQ.

Adapted from her masters thesis, *Broken Mirrors/Broken Minds* is not only Matland's first book but it is also the first book in English to be entirely devoted to the work of Argento. Such a book has long been overdue and although a little expensive at £5 a copy I would urge any Argento fan to acquire a copy quickly as this is a truly thought-provoking tome, positively demanding the reader to go back and watch the films in question all over again — with fresh eyes.

Equally as refreshing is Matland's enthusiasm for her subject. Having previously written articles for magazines such as *Angerona* and *The Dark Side* she has an affinity with the horror genre and towards this writer's work in particular. Furthermore, it's conveyed in her writing style, which is always eloquent and engaging and despite touching on a great many complicated theories (eg semiotics, film theory and psychoanalysis) Matland always manages to summarise in a way that is concise and to the point, making *Broken Mirrors/Broken Minds* a joy to read.

Moreover, with its 320 illustrated pages, 16 more short ads and poster art, it is certainly one of the clearest books about horror that I've seen.

And absolutely necessary if you want to know about the real Argento.
Pip Kennedy

STAGEFRIGHT

Starring David Brandon, Barbara Cupisti, Robert Gilgorov, Andrea Leeds, Ann Miller, Lucie Bah, Gini Patrick, Eve Arden, Samuel S. Hinds, John Morghen, Franklin Pangborn, Constance Collier, Jack Carson

Written by Lew Cooper

Music by Simon Boswell

Produced by Joe D'Amato, Filmirage

Directed by Michele Soavi

With his 1986 feature debut *STAGEFRIGHT* (aka *BLOODY BIRD*, *DELIRIA* and *AQUARIUS*) Michele Soavi plays Dario Argento by numbers, yet at the same time demonstrates enough new ideas and visual flair to be considered a talent in his own right, proving himself to be probably the most accomplished of the Argento acolytes.

Soavi's influences are apparent as early as the credit sequence (the melancholy mewling of a cat is heard clearly audible over the sound of splashing water and we wonder what fiendish thing is going on behind the blank screen in front of us). Soavi, however, gives us no answers, and like his mentor before him he delights in playing with his audience, a fact that is underlined when we later see the cat alive and well.

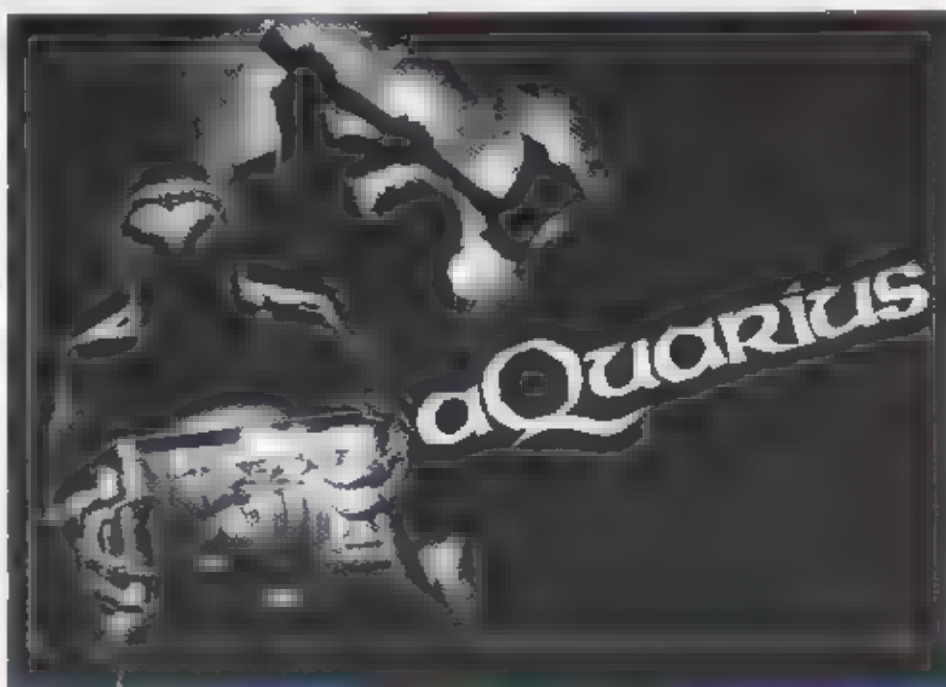
Following the credits *STAGEFRIGHT* launches into a dizzying display of choreography which is played like something out of *42nd STREET* before the camera suddenly and unexpectedly pulls back, revealing the fact that everything so far has been a charade. What we are in fact watching is a carefully staged theatrical piece, a fact that is emphasised by the repeated cutting back to the chiselled features of the show's director who clearly regards the spectacle before him with disdain and who abruptly puts a stop to the act on with a curt "Cut!". Further vignettes like this always provide us with more information to support the theory, but what we are watching is indeed a

set-up, both by the director and the film and by Soavi on us the audience.

This new world we have entered is no less familiar to us. And the film within a film format recalls that of *OPERA*, with its larger-than-life characters and behind the scenes intrigue, itself largely based around the experiences of a real Argento shout. The film even goes so far as to feature an Argento stand-in in the character of the sadistic director Peter, who like *OPERA*'s Marco is a petulant who loves to degrade his colleagues. Peter sees the murder of the wardrobe mistress, Betty, as a golden opportunity to promote his show and views the situation as a sort of game, forcing his players to join in by locking them in the theatre. Perhaps in doing so, Soavi is commenting on the lengths a certain director will go to secure a realistic performance from his cast?

Furthermore, it isn't arbitrary that there is a certain similarity between Peter and the murderer Irving Wallace. A notion which is given an added resonance in a scene early on in the film when Betty declares that Peter will kill them if they don't hurry up. Minutes later she is indeed the first victim of Peter's alter-ego, the Night Owl. Indeed, it may not be too far fetched to suggest that the actor who plays Peter even resembles his bird-like nemesis, with his high cheek bones, sharp nose and cruel eyes.

This bird motif can be traced back to Hitchcock's *PSYCHO* where the killer seems to be as cold and calculating as



one of Norman Bates' stuffed birds. Interestingly some of the birds in the Bates Motel were owls.

Like that film also, there is a lot of emphasis in *STAGEFRIGHT* on sight and seeing, from close-ups of the girls making-up their eyes, through to point-of-view shots, to the unblinking eyes of the killer staring sightlessly into the camera 'eye'. And much is made of the notion that what you see isn't always what it actually is.

And finally, presenting as Soavi does an image of a chainsaw-wielding bird, one cannot help but wonder where on earth horror can go from here!

Pip Kennedy

DARIO ARGENTO'S WORLD OF HORROR

Produced by DAC Film, Rome.

Written and directed by Michele Soavi.

We are, of course, all familiar with the cinematic world of Dario Argento. His films - those weirdly surreal, onerotic meditations on a world gone mad; a world of twisted logic and rhapsodic violence, where perversity and voyeurism are given free reign, leaving scant regard for narrative constraints.

But there is another side to this world. That of Argento himself. And one which can be now heard in English, as (not before time) the dubbed version of Michele Soavi's 1985 documentary *DARIO ARGENTO'S WORLD OF HORROR* at last sees the cold light of day.

Comprising equally of interviews with Argento, on location behind-the-scenes footage and film clips and out-takes, *DARIO*



ARGENTO'S WORLD OF HORROR is a well-crafted and brilliantly put together document of Argento's career up until that point (ie the making of *PHENOMENA* aka *CREEPERS*) which is quite simply essential viewing.

Furthermore, commissioned as it was, to tie in with the release of *DEMONS*, this documentary also gives an insight into the making of this, as well as the Argento/Romero produced *DAWN OF THE DEAD*, thus providing the opportunity to show clips from both movies - in addition to the canon of films made by Argento as director (with his comedy *FIVE DAYS IN MILAN* excluded by definition).

However, the truly revelatory parts of this documentary lie not in the abundance of film clips, well chosen and appropriate though they may be, but in the way Soavi manages to at least partly lift away some of the mystique which seems to surround this particular director and his films.

And we learn that Argento is nothing short

of a perfectionist when it comes to the desired effect; whether it is having his own team of entomologists breed six million flies for *PHENOMENA*, making a camera absail down a steel wire in *SUSPIRIA* or the staggering innovation of the Louma crane set-up used in *TENERE*, a Dario Argento film is always a vision of pyrotechnical excess and in Soavi's documentary it is here for all to see.

Also included is a glimpse at the way Argento works with his composers on the scoring of his movies. Here we see him in his now legendary collaboration with rock band The Goblins for *SUSPIRIA*, as well as Keith Emerson on *INFERNO*.

Equally 'revealing' though, are the interview sections with Argento, deliberately seeming to become part of the mise-en-scene, his conversations peppered with eminently quotable expressions, which are highly dubious as well. For instance, when asked why he makes the sort of films he does, he declares that he wants to be loved, or when he owns up to the fact that the black gloved hand on the screen is usually that of his own. Similarly, when talking of his murder tableaux, he explains that it is at such moments that his creativity explodes. All this does seem a bit suspect, yet does it really matter?

DARIO ARGENTO'S WORLD OF HORROR concludes with Argento announcing that perhaps now that we have watched his documentary we know a little more about his films and him. And yet, the man is still an enigma.

Long may he stay that way.

Pip Kennedy

LA CHIESA - THE CHURCH

Dario Argento presents an ADC Film production for the Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica and Reteitalia.

Directed by Michele Soavi.

Written by Dario Argento, Soavi and Franco Ferrini.

Special Effects by Sergio Stivaletti and Rosario Prestopino.

Music by Keith Emerson, Goblin, Philip Glass and Simon Boswell.

Running Time: 96 minutes.

Starring Tomas Arana, Barbara Cupisti, Chateau Vallon, Feodor Chaliapin, Hugh Quarshie, Antonella Vitale, Asia Argento.

Much has been said already in this magazine about Michele Soavi's second



● THE CHURCH

feature *LA CHIESA* (THE CHURCH). However, I couldn't let the opportunity go by without penning something on this film myself, since it happens to be a particular favourite of mine.

I first saw *LA CHIESA* at the Scala in 1989, where it was being premiered as part of a film festival. The print we saw had been prepared especially by Soavi himself, with previously edited sequences restored. It was also shown in Italian, without dubbing or subtitles.

This didn't matter, because for me, its images were enough, remaining ingrained upon my memory ever since.

Based on a story by Argento and also co-produced by him, *LA CHIESA* takes its cue from the familiar idea of a socially constructed "House of the Damned", built by an ancient architect/chemist, and like Soavi's previous film *STAGEFRIGHT*, basically revolves around a group of people trapped together in a building.

However, here is where the similarities end, for whilst *STAGEFRIGHT* was a relatively small-scale production, *LA CHIESA*, with its Medieval prologue, flashback sequences and stupendous set-pieces is nothing less than Soavi's *INFERNO*. A gloriously over-blown vision of demonic dealings with images worthy of Danté and Hieronymus Bosch, every frame radiates with menace. Furthermore, the fact that this house of the damned is a church,

gives *LA CHIESA* an added blasphemous sub-text, which is even echoed in parts of the music score. For instance, when composer Keith Emerson seems to mock the mannerly spirit of Mozart, with his organ-based 'Prelude', as all around hell is literally breaking loose, or in the epic opening sequence, with its Teutonic knights thundering through the woods to the strains of a proud and pompous fanfare, completely belying the fact that they are about to embark on the wholesale slaughter of an entire village.

Ironies such as these abound in *LA CHIESA* and obviously a great many of Soavi's personal beliefs and obsessions are on view here. In particular, the theme of conflict between reality and illusion (which was touched upon in *STAGEFRIGHT*) is here given centre stage, as one by one each character is tested; faced with diabolical visions which they must confront or else be forced to follow the left-handed path forever.

Whilst in metaphorical terms the labyrinthine nature of the visuals and abundance of tunnels and passageways in the church can be compared to the maze of the human brain, on the surface these visions seem as if they were part of one bad trip.

Moreover, with its elaborate puzzles, tantalising visual clues and clever juxtaposition, *LA CHIESA* bears more than a passing resemblance to the work of another highly observant director, Peter Greenaway.

Indeed, one could go as far as to say that *LA CHIESA* is Argento out of Greenaway, such is the meticulous attention to detail and the many layers of meaning contained within each shot.

Another plus for *THE CHURCH* is the tension, building up gradually at first through seemingly innocuous occurrences such as the ghostly sound of horses hooves which follow little Lotte, to more sinister activities like the obsessive typing of the number 666 over and over again (reminding us of Jack Nicholson's Jack Torrance in *THE SHINING*) by the now fully possessed Evald until the diabolical visions threaten to take over completely and what has previously been illusion now manifests itself as reality, leading to a finale which literally brings the house down. Few films can possibly come close to matching the images of the final scenes; as the ancient wheels are set in motion, from out of the depths below rises a seething mound of bodies, slowly being brought back to putrid life. For me it is an image I will never forget.

Pip Kennedy

IL NIDO DEL RAGNO SPIDER LABYRINTH

Starring Roland Wybenga, Paola Rinaldi, Marghereta Von Krauss, Claudia Muzli, William Berger, Stephane Audran.
Written by Tonino Cervi, Riccardo Aragno, Cesare Frugoni and Gianfranco Manfredi.
Camera: Nino Celeste.
Music by Franco Piersanti.
Special FX by Sergio Silvaletti
Produced by Tonino Cervi.
Directed by Gianfranco Giagni.

The opening of *SPIDER LABYRINTH*, with trench-coated trendy professor Alan Whitmore (Wybenga) driving his limo around soap city Dallas to the strains of 'After you're gone' provokes fears that we're in for yet another of those sartorially immaculate, slickly-lensed but stiflingly bland yuppie efforts that the Italians have been passing off as horror movies in recent years. But things start to get interesting when the elegant prof is dispatched by a cabal of concerned clerics to investigate a sinister, sacreligious cult based in Budapest. The tone of ecclesiastical cloak-and-dagger echoes Pupi Avati's *ZEDER*, and throughout *SPIDER LABYRINTH* there are also touches aplenty of Avati's masterly *HOUSE WITH LAUGHING WINDOWS*, the horror building with the gradual accumulation of disturbing detail. Pre-Glasnost Budapest as rendered by Giagni is every bit the morose inferno that Avati makes of remote rural Italy (a picture possibly not too far from the truth — just think what turned up in Romania after the fall of Ceasescu), and Stephane Audran (if you think she's slumming it here, you haven't seen Jesus Franco's *FACELESS*) presides regally over the creepy goings-on as the doomed protagonist pursues his investigation towards the inevitable revelation that his quest has actually been an inward one, concluding at the place where his worst nightmares can come true.

The Avati-ish atmosphere is punctuated by Argento-esque (in lighting and design) set-



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piece kills, which the film can accommodate well enough, but it's the increasingly intrusive appearances of a homicidal harpy (complete with a tongue that would put Gene Simmons to shame) which signal that Giagni really is trying to weave too much into this particular spider web, and when Whitmore finally enters the luridly-lit labyrinth to discover the awful secret of the cult's initiation ceremony, it's as though Giagni has lost his own way and tacked on the ending of an entirely different movie, namedly Sergio Stivaletti's restaging of his favourite moments from John Carpenter's *THE THING*. The arachnid elements of that are stretched to their sickening extreme — any spider sensitive soul who thought that lame 'thrillomedy' (cringe!) *ARACHNAPHOBIA* was the ultimate in spider horror will *shit* if exposed to Stivaletti's demented creation, though my all-time favourite moment in this sub-genre remains Lucio Fulci's *BEYOND* outrage.

SPIDER LABYRINTH turns out to be an interesting — though ultimately indigestible — concoction (in fact, *collusion*) of two polar strands in the rich spaghetti tradition — upfront graphic shocks and understated, atmospheric menace. Mario Bava was able to reconcile the two within his oeuvre, but Sigor Giagni is really biting off more than he can chew by attempting to do so in the course of one film. Did Giagni doubt that subtlety was enough? Maybe the film's

ending was foisted on him, much as Jacques Tourneur's *NIGHT OF THE DEMON* was marred by the meddling of those who weren't sympathetic to his Lewtonian aspirations.

Giagni should continue to pursue the Avati avenue wherever it leads him. Stivaletti should make his dream SFX extravaganza (presumably he'll have to go to Hollywood to do it). After *SPIDER LABYRINTH*, I'll be keeping a keen eye on both of them.

John Martin



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